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THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK,

BY

ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The court of Alcinous.

The princeſs Nauſicaa returns to the city, and Ulyſſes ſoon after follows thither. He is met by Pallas in the form of a young virgin, who guides him to the palace, and directs him in what manner to addreſs the queen Arete. She then involves him in a miſt, which cauſes him to paſs inviſible. The palace and gardens of Alcinous deſcribed. Ulyſſes falling at the feet of the queen, the miſt diſperſes, the Phaeacians admire, and receive him with reſpect. The queen enquiring by what means he had the garments he then wore, he relates to her and Alcinous his departure from Calypſo, and his arrival on their dominions.

The ſame day continues, and the book ends with the night.

THE patient, heav'nly man thus ſuppliant pray'd;
While the ſlow mules draw on the imperial maid:
Thro' the proud ſtreet ſhe moves, the public gaze:
The turning wheel before the palace ſtays.

This book opens with the introduction of Ulyſſes to Alcinous; every ſtep the poet takes carries on the main deſign of the poem, with a progreſs ſo natural, that each incident ſeems really to have happened, and not to be invention. Thus Nauſicaa accidentally meets Ulyſſes, and introduces him to Alcinous her father, who lands him in Ithaca: it is poſſible this might be true hi-

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With ready love her brothers gath'ring round, 5
Receiv'd the veſtures, and the mules unbound.

ſtory; the poet might build upon a real foundation, and only adorn the truth with the ornaments of poetry. It is to be wiſhed, that a faithful hiſtory of the Trojan war, and the voyages of Ulyſſes had been tranſmitted to poſterity; it would have been the beſt comment upon the Iliad and Odyſſey. We are not to look upon the poems of Homer as mere romances, but as true ſtories, heightened and beautified by poetry: thus the Iliad is built upon a real diſſention, that happened in a real war between Greece and Troy; and the Odyſſey upon the real voyages of Ulyſſes, and the diſorders that happened through his abſence in his own country. Nay, it is not impoſſible but that many of thoſe incidents, that ſeem moſt extravagant in Homer, might have an appearing truth, and be juſtified by the opinions, and miſtaken credulity of thoſe ages. What is there in all Homer more ſeemingly extravagant, than the ſtory of the race of the Cyclops, with one broad eye in their foreheads? and yet, as Sir Walter Ralegh very judiciouſly conjectures, this may be built upon a ſeeming truth: they were a people of Sicily remarkable for ſavageneſs and cruelty, and perhaps might in their wars make uſe of a head-piece, or vizor, which had but one ſight in it, and this might give occaſion to ſailors who coaſted thoſe ſhores to miſtake the ſingle ſight of the vizor, for a broad eye in the forehead, eſpecially when they before looked upon them as monſters for their barbarity. I doubt not but we loſe many beauties in Homer for want of a real hiſtory, and think him extravagant, when he only complies with the opinions of former ages. I thought it neceſſary to make this obſervation, as a general vindication of Homer; eſpecially in this place, immediately before he enters upon the relation of thoſe ſtories which have been thought moſt to outrage credibility; if then we look upon the Odyſſey as all fiction,

She ſeeks the bridal bow'r: a matron there
The riſing fire ſupplies with buſy care,
Whoſe charms in youth her father's heart inflam'd,
Now worn with age, Eurymeduſa nam'd:
The captive dame Phaeacian rovers bore,
Snatch'd from Epirus, her ſweet native ſhore,
(A grateful prize) and in her bloom beſtow'd
On good Alcinous, honour'd as a God:
Nurſe of Nauſicaa from her infant years,
And tender ſecond to a mother's cares.

Now from the ſacred thicket where he lay,
To town Ulyſſes took the winding way.

we conſider it unworthily; it ought to be read as a ſtory founded upon truth, but adorned with the embelliſhments of poetry, to convey inſtruction with pleaſure the more effectually.

ỳ. 10. Eurymeduſa *named.*] Euſtathius remarks, that the Phaeacians were people of great commerce, and that it was cuſtomary in thoſe ages to exchange ſlaves in traffic; or perhaps Eurymeduſa might be a captive, piracy then being honourable, and ſuch ſeizures of cattle or ſlaves frequent. The paſſage concerning the brothers of Nauſicaa has not eſcaped the cenſure of the critics; Homer in the original calls them like gods, and yet in the ſame breath gives them the employment of ſlaves, they unyoke the mules, and carry into the palace the burdens they brought. A twofold anſwer may be given to this objection, and this conduct might proceed from the general cuſtom of the age, which made ſuch actions reputable; or from the particular love the brothers bore their ſiſter, which might induce them to act thus, as an inſtance of it.

Propitious Pallas, to ſecure her care,
Around him ſpread a veil of thicken'd air;

ν. 20. *Around him ſpread a veil of thicken'd air.*] It may be aſked what occaſion there is to make Ulyſſes inviſible? Euſtathius anſwers, not only to preſerve him from inſults as he was a ſtranger, but that he might raiſe a greater ſurprize in Alcinous by his ſudden appearance. But, adds he, the whole is an allegory; and Ulyſſes wiſely chuſing the evening to enter unobſerved, gave occaſion to the poet to bring in the goddeſs of wiſdom to make him inviſible.

Virgil has borrowed this paſſage from Homer, and Venus renders Æneas inviſible in the ſame manner as Minerva Ulyſſes. Scaliger compares the two authors, and prefers Virgil infinitely before Homer, in the fifth book of his Poetics.

At Venus obſcuro gradientes aere ſepſit,
Et multo nebulae circum Dea fudit amictu;
Cernere ne quis eos, neu quis contingere poſſet,
Molirive moram, aut veniendi poſcere cauſas.

Scaliger ſays the verſes are more ſonorous than Homer's, and that it was more neceſſary to make Æneas inviſible than Ulyſſes, he being amongſt a perfidious nation. But was not the danger as great from the rudeneſs of the Phaeacians, as from the perfidiouſneſs of the Carthaginians? Beſides, Virgil does not mention the perfidiouſneſs of the Carthaginians; ſo that it is the reaſon of Scaliger, not Virgil: and whether the verſes be more ſonorous, is ſubmitted to the ear of the reader. He is chiefly delighted with

Et multo nebulae circum Dea fudit amictu.

Qui ſolus verſus, ſays he, *deterreat Graecos ab ea ſententia, qua ſuum contendunt praeferendum.* He allows Κερτομίοι τ' επέεσσι, *etc.* to be a tolerable ſmooth verſe,

To ſhun th' encounter of the vulgar croud,
Inſulting ſtill, inquiſitive and loud.
When near the fam'd Phaeacian walls he drew,
The beauteous city opening to his view,
His ſtep a virgin met, and ſtood before:
A poliſh'd urn the ſeeming virgin bore,
And youthful ſmil'd; but in the low diſguiſe
Lay hid the goddeſs with the azure eyes.
Show me, fair daughter, (thus the chief demands)
The houſe of him who rules theſe happy lands.

Commodus et raſilis, but yet far inferior to this of Virgil,

Molirive moram, et veniendi poſcere cauſas.

It is but juſtice to lay the verſes of Homer before the reader.

Καὶ τότ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ἷξετο πόλιν δ' ἶμεν', ἀμφὶ δ' Ἀθήνη,
Πολλὸν ἠέρα χεῦε φίλα φρονέουσ' Ὀδυσῆϊ,
Μή τις Φαιήκων μεγαθύμων ἀγλαολήσας,
Κερτομέοι τ' ἐπέεσσι, καὶ ἐξερέηται ὅτις εἶη.

I determine not which author has the greater beauty, but undoubtedly Homer is more happy in the occaſion of the fiction than Virgil. Homer drew his deſcription from the wiſdom of Ulyſſes in entering the town in the evening, he was really inviſible to the Phaeacians, and Homer only heightened the truth by poetry; but Virgil is more bold, and has no ſuch circumſtance to juſtify his relation; for Æneas went into Carthage in the open day.

℣. 26. ——*The ſeeming virgin.* etc.] It may be aſked why Minerva does not appear as a goddeſs, but in a borrowed form? The poet has already told us, that ſhe dreaded the wrath of Neptune; one deity could not

Thro' many woes and wand'ring, lo! I come
To good Alcinous' hoſpitable dome.
Far from my native coaſt, I rove alone,
A wretched ſtranger, and of all unknown!
The goddeſs anſwer'd. Father, I obey,
And point the wand'ring traveller his way:
Well known to me the palace you enquire,
For faſt beſide it dwells my honour'd ſire,
But ſilent march, nor greet the common train
With queſtion needleſs, or enquiry vain.
A race of rugged mariners are theſe;
Unpoliſh'd men, and boiſtrous as their ſeas:
The native iſlanders alone their care,
And hateful he that breathes a foreign air.
Theſe did the ruler of the deep ordain
To build proud navies, and command the main;
On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way;
No bird ſo light, no thought ſo ſwift as they,
Thus having ſpoke, th' unknown celeſtial leads:
The footſteps of the deity he treads,
And ſecret moves along the crouded ſpace,
Unſeen of all the rude Phaeacian race.

openly oppoſe another deity, and therefore ſhe acts thus inviſibly.

℣. 47. *On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way.*] This circumſtance is not inſerted without a good effect: it could not but greatly encourage Ulyſſes to underſtand that he was arrived amongſt a people that excelled in navigation; this gave him a proſpect of being ſpeedily

(So Pallas order'd, Pallas to their eyes
The miſt objected, and condens'd the ſkies.)
The chief with wonder ſees th' extended ſtreets,
The ſpreading harbours, and the riding fleets;
He next their princes lofty domes admires,
In ſep'rate iſlands crown'd with riſing ſpires;

conveyed to his own country, by the aſſiſtance of a nation ſo expert in maritime affairs. Euſtathius.

℣. 53.——*Pallas to their eyes the miſt condenſes.*] Scaliger in his Poetics calls this an impertinent repetition, and commends Virgil for not imitating it, for Homer dwells upon it no leſs than three times; and indeed one would almoſt imagine that Virgil was of the ſame opinion, for he has followed the turn of this whole paſſage, and omitted this repetition: yet he treads almoſt ſtep by ſtep in the path of Homer, and Æneas and Ulyſſes are drawn in the ſame colours;

Miratur molem Æneas, magalia quondam:
Miratur portas, ſtrepitumque et ſtrata viarum.

Θαύμαζεν δ' Ὀδυσεὺς λιμένας τε νῆας τε ἐΐσας,
Αὐτῶν τ' Ἡρώων ἀγορὰς, τε τείχεα μακρά,
Ὑψηλὰ, σκολόπεσσιν ἀρηρότα.

Homer poetically inſerts the topography of this city of the Phaeacians: though they were an unwarlike nation, yet they underſtand the art of fortification; their city is ſurrounded with a ſtrong wall, and that wall guarded with paliſades. But whence this caution, ſince Homer tells us in the preceding book, that they were in no danger of an enemy? It might ariſe from their very fears, which naturally ſuggeſt to cowards, that they cannot be too ſafe; this would make them practiſe the art of fortification more aſſiduouſly than a more brave people, who uſually put more confidence in valour than in walls, as was the practice of the Spartans.

And deep intrenchments, and high walls of ſtone,
That gird the city like a marble zone.
At length the kingly palace gates he view'd:
There ſtopp'd the goddeſs, and her ſpeech renew'd.

My taſk is done; the manſion you enquire
Appears before you: enter, and admire.
High-thron'd, and feaſting, there thou ſhalt behold
The ſceptred Rulers. Fear not, but be bold:
A decent boldneſs ever meets with friends,
Succeeds, and ev'n a ſtranger recommends.
Firſt to the queen prefer a ſuppliant's claim,
Alcinous' queen, Arete is her name,
The ſame her parents, and her pow'er the ſame.
For know, from Ocean's god Nauſithous ſprung,
And Peribaea, beautiful and young:

℣. 63. *My taſk is done*, etc.] As Deities ought not to be introduced without a neceſſity, ſo, when introduced, they ought to be employed in acts of importance, and worthy of their divinity: it may be aſked if Homer obſerves this rule in this epiſode, where a goddeſs ſeems to appear only to direct Ulyſſes to the palace of Alcinous, which, as he himſelf tells us, a child could have done? But the chief deſign of Minerva was to adviſe Ulyſſes in his preſent exigencies: and (as Euſtathius remarks) ſhe opens her ſpeech to him with great and noble ſentiments. She informs him how to win the favour of Alcinous, upon which depends the whole happineſs of her heroe; and by which ſhe brings about his re-eſtabliſhment in his kingdom, the aim of the whole Odyſſey. Virgil makes uſe of the ſame method in his Æneis, and Venus there executes the ſame office for her ſon, as Minerva for her favourite, in ſome degree as a guide, but chiefly as a counſellor.

(Eurymedon's laſt hope, who rul'd of old
The race of giants, impious, proud and bold;
Periſh'd the nation in unrighteous war,
Periſh'd the prince, and left this only heir.)
Who now, by Neptune's am'rous pow'r compreſt,
Produc'd a monarch that his people bleſt,
Father and prince of the Phaeacian name;
From him Rhexenor and Alcinous came.
The firſt by Phoebus' burning arrows fired,
New from his nuptials, hapleſs youth! expir'd.
No ſon ſurviv'd: Arete heir'd his ſtate,
And her, Alcinous choſe his royal mate.

℣. 74. *Eurymedon*, etc.] This paſſage is worthy obſervation, as it diſcovers to us the time when the race of the antient giants periſhed; this Eurymedon was grandfather to Nauſithous, the father of Alcinous; ſo that the giants were extirpated forty or fifty years before the war of Troy. This exactly agrees with ancient ſtory, which informs us, that Hercules and Theſeus purged the earth from thoſe monſters. Plutarch in his life of Theſeus tells us, that they were men of great ſtrength, and public robbers, one of whom was called the Bender of Pines. Now Theſeus ſtole away Helen in her infancy, and conſequently theſe giants were deſtroyed ſome years before the Trojan expedition. Dacier, Plutarch.

℣. 84, *etc. Arete*.] It is obſervable that this Arete was both wife and niece to Alcinous, an inſtance that the Grecians married with ſuch near relations: the ſame appears from Demoſthenes and other Greek orators. But what then is the notion of inceſt amongſt the ancients? The collateral branch was not thought inceſtuous, for Juno was the wife and ſiſter of Jupiter. Brothers likewiſe married their brother's wives, as Deiphobus He-

With honours yet to womankind unknown,
This queen he graces, and divides the throne:
In equal tenderneſs her ſons conſpire,
And all the children emulate their ſire.
When thro' the ſtreet ſhe gracious deigns to move,
(The public wonder, and the public love)
The tongues of all with tranſport ſound her praiſe,
The eyes of all, as on a goddeſs, gaze.
She feels the triumph of a gen'rous breaſt
To heal diviſions, to relieve th' oppreſt;
In virtue rich; in bleſſing others, bleſt.

len, after the death of Paris: the ſame was practiſed amongſt the Jews, and conſequently being permitted by Moſes was not inceſtuous. So that the only inceſt was in the aſcending, not collateral or deſcending branch; as when parents and children married; thus when Myrrha lay with her father, and Lot with his daughters, this was accounted inceſt. The reaſon is very evident, a child cannot pay the duty of a child to a parent, and at the ſame time of a wife or huſband; nor can a father act with the authority of a father towards a perſon who is at once his wife and daughter. The relations interfere, and introduce confuſion, where the law of nature and reaſon requires regularity.

℣. 95. *To heal diviſions*, etc.] This office of Arete has been looked upon as ſomewhat extraordinary, that ſhe ſhould decide the quarrels of the ſubjects, a province more proper for Alcinous; and therefore the ancients endeavoured to ſoften it by different readings; and inſtead of οἵσιν τ' εὐφροσύνῃσι, they inſerted ἧσιν τ' εὐφροσύνῃσι, or *ſhe decides amongſt women*. Euſtathius in the text reads it in a third way, ἧσιν τ' εὐφροσυνῃσι, or *by her wiſdom*. Spondanus believes, that the queen had a ſhare in the government of the Phaeacians; but Euſtathius thinks

Go then ſecure, thy humble ſuit prefer,
And owe thy country and thy friends to her.

With that the goddeſs deigned no longer ſtay,
But o'er the world of waters wing'd her way:
Forſaking Scheria's ever pleaſing ſhore,
The winds to Marathon the virgin bore;
Thence, where proud Athens rears her tow'ry head,
With opening ſtreets and ſhining ſtructures ſpread,
She paſt, delighted with the well-known ſeats;
And to Erectheus' ſacred dome retreats.

Mean-while Ulyſſes at the palace waits,
There ſtops, and anxious with his ſoul debates,
Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates.

thinks the poet intended to ſet the character of Arete in a fair point of light, ſhe bearing the chief part in this book, and a great ſhare in the ſequel of the Odyſſey; by this method he introduces her to the beſt advantage, and makes her a perſon of importance, and worthy to have a place in heroic poetry; and indeed he has given her a very amiable character.

℣. 109. *Fixt in amaze before the royal gates.*] The poet here opens a very agreeable ſcene, and deſcribes the beauty of the palace and gardens of Alcinous. Diodorus Siculus adapts this paſſage to the iſland Taprobane, Juſtin Martyr to paradiſe; Τὸ Παραδείσε δὲ εἰκόνα τὸν Ἀλκινόε κῆπον σάζειν πεποίηκε. He tranſcribes this whole paſſage into his apology, but with ſome variation from the common editions, for inſtead of

——————————ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰεὶ
Ζεφυρίη πνείουσα, ——————he reads,
ἀλλ' ἀεὶ ἄνεμος ζεφυρίη, *etc.* perhaps more elegantly. Euſtathius obſerves that Homer ſuits his poetry to the things he relates, for in the whole Iliad there is not a de-

The front appear'd with radiant ſplendors gay,
Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day,
The walls were maſſy braſs: the cornice high
Blue metals crown'd, in colours of the ſky:
Rich plates of gold the folding doors incaſe;
The pillars ſilver, on a brazen baſe;

ſcription of this nature, nor an opportunity to introduce it in a poem that repreſents nothing but objects of terror and blood. The poet himſelf ſeems to go a little out of the way to bring it into the Odyſſey; for it has no neceſſary connection with the poem, nor would it be leſs perfect if it had been omitted: but as Mercury, when he ſurveyed the bower of Calypſo, raviſhed with the beauty of it, ſtood a while in a ſtill admiration; ſo Homer, delighted with the ſcenes he draws, ſtands ſtill a few moments, and ſuſpends the ſtory of the poem, to enjoy the beauties of theſe gardens of Alcinous. But even here he ſhews his judgment, in not letting his fancy run out into a long deſcription: he concludes the whole in the compaſs of twenty verſes, and reſumes the thread of his ſtory. Rapin, I confeſs, cenſures the deſcription of the gardens: he calls it puerile and too light for eloquence, that it is ſpun out to too great a length, and is ſomewhat affected, has no due coherence with, nor bears a juſt proportion to the whole, by reaſon of its being too glittering. This is ſpoken with too great ſeverity: it is neceſſary to relieve the mind of the reader ſometimes with gayer ſcenes, that it may proceed with a freſh appetite to the ſucceeding entertainment. In ſhort, if it be a fault, it is a beautiful fault; and Homer may be ſaid here, as he was upon another occaſion by St. Auguſtin, to be *dulciſſime vanus*. The admiration of the gold and ſilver is no blemiſh to Ulyſſes: for, as Euſtathius remarks, it proceeds not out of avarice, but from the beauty of the work, and uſefulneſs and magnificence

Silver the lintals deep-projecting o'er,
And gold, the ringlets that command the door.
Two rows of ſtately dogs, on either hand,
In ſculptur'd gold and labour'd ſilver ſtand.
Theſe Vulcan form'd with art divine, to wait
Immortal guardians at Alcinous' gate;
Alive each animated frame appears,
And ſtill to live, beyond the pow'r of years.

of the buildings. The whole deſcription, continues he, ſuits the character of the Phaeacians, a proud, luxurious people, delighted with ſhew and oſtentation.

℣. 118. *Two rows of ſtately dogs*, etc.] We have already ſeen that dogs were kept as a piece of ſtate, from the inſtance of thoſe that attended Telemachus: here Alcinous has images of dogs in gold, for the ornament of his palace; Homer animates them in his poetry; but to ſoften the deſcription, he introduces Vulcan, and aſcribes the wonder to the power of a god. If we take the poetical dreſs away, the truth is, that theſe dogs were formed with ſuch excellent art, that they ſeemed to be alive, and Homer by a liberty allowable to poetry deſcribes them as really having that life, which they only have in appearance. In the Iliad he ſpeaks of living tripods with greater boldneſs. Euſtathius recites another opinion of ſome of the ancients, who thought theſe Κύνες not to be animals, but a kind of large nails (ἧλους) or pins, made uſe of in buildings, and to this day the name is retained by builders, as dogs of iron, *etc.* It is certain the words will bear this interpretation, but the former is more after the ſpirit of Homer, and more noble in poetry. Beſides, if the latter were intended, it would be abſurd to aſcribe a work of ſo little importance to a deity.

Fair thrones within from ſpace to ſpace were rais'd,
Where various carpets with imbroidry blaz'd,
The work of matrons: theſe the princes preſt,
Day following day, a long continu'd feaſt.
Refulgent pedeſtals the walls ſurround,
Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd;

℣. 124. *Fair thrones within,* etc.] The poet does not ſay of what materials theſe thrones were made, whether of gold or ſilver, to avoid the imputation of being thought fabulous in his deſcription; it being almoſt incredible, remarks Euſtathius, that ſuch quantities of gold and ſilver could be in the poſſeſſion of ſuch a king as Alcinous; though, if we conſider that his people were greatly given to navigation, the relation may come within the bounds of credibility.

℣. 128. *Refulgent pedeſtals the walls ſurround,*
Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd.]
This is a remarkable piece of grandeur: lamps, as appears from the 18th of the Odyſſey, were not at this time known to the Grecians, but only torches: theſe were held by images in the ſhape of beautiful youths, and thoſe images were of gold. Lucretius has tranſlated theſe verſes.

———*Aurea ſunt juvenum ſimulacra per aedeis,*
Lampades igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
Lumina nocturnis epulis ut ſuppeditentur.

It is admirable to obſerve with what propriety Homer adapts his poetry to the characters of his perſons: Neſtor is a wiſe man; when he is firſt ſeen in the Odyſſey, it is at ſacrifice, and there is not the leaſt appearance of pomp or luxury in his palace or entertainments. The Phaeacians are of an oppoſite character, and the poet deſcribes them conſiſtently with it; they are all along a proud, idle, effeminate people; though ſuch a pom-

The poliſh'd ore, reflecting ev'ry ray,
Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.
Full fifty handmaids from the houſhold train;
Some turn the mill, or ſift the golden grain,
Some ply the loom; their buſy fingers move
Like poplar-leaves when Zephyr fans the grove.

pous deſcription would have ill ſuited the wiſe Neſtor, it excellently agrees with the vain Alcinous.

ỳ. 135. *Like poplar-leaves when Zephyr fans the grove.*] There is ſome obſcurity in this ſhort alluſion, and ſome refer it to the work, others to the damſels imployed in work: Euſtathius is of the opinion that it alludes to the damſels, and expreſſes the quick and continued motion of their hands: I have followed this interpretation, and think that Homer intended to illuſtrate that quick and intermingled motion, by comparing them to the branches of a poplar agitated by winds, all at once in motion, ſome bending this, ſome that way. The other interpretations are more forced, and leſs intelligible.

ỳ. 107. [*of the original.*]

Καιροσίων δ' ἐθονίων ἀπολείβεται ὑγρὸν ἔλαιον.)

This paſſage is not without difficulty; ſome of the ancients underſtood it to ſignify the thickneſs and cloſeneſs of the texture, which was ſo compactly wrought, that oil could not penetrate it; others thought it expreſſed the ſmoothneſs and ſoftneſs of it, as if oil ſeemed to flow from it; or laſtly, that it ſhone with ſuch a gloſſy colour as looked like oil. Dacier renders the verſe according to the opinion firſt recited.

So cloſe the work that oil diffus'd in vain,
Glides off innoxious and without a ſtain.

Any of theſe interpretations make the paſſage intelligible, though I think the deſcription does better without it.

Not more renown'd the men of Scheria's iſle,
For ſailing arts and all the naval toil,
Than works of female ſkill their women's pride,
The flying ſhuttle thro' the threads to guide:
Pallas to theſe her double gifts imparts,
Inventive genius, and induſtrious arts.

Cloſe to the gates a ſpacious garden lies,
From ſtorms defended and inclement ſkies:

It is left to the judgment of the reader which to prefer; they are all to be found in Euſtathius.

ẏ. 138. -----*Works of female ſkill their women's pride.*] We may gather from what Homer here relates concerning the ſkill of theſe Phaeacian damſels, that they were famed for theſe works of curioſity: the Corcyrians were much given to traffic, and perhaps they might bring ſlaves from the Sidonians, who inſtructed them in theſe manufactures. Dacier.

ẏ. 142. *Cloſe to the gates a ſpacious garden lies.*] This famous garden of Alcinous contains no more than four acres of ground, which in thoſe times of ſimplicity was thought a large one even for a prince. It is laid out as Euſtathius obſerves, into three parts: a grove for fruits and ſhade, a vineyard, and an allotment for olives and herbs. It is watered with two fountains, the one ſupplies the palace and town, the other the garden and the flowers. But it may be asked what reality there is in the relation, and whether any trees bear fruit all the year in this iſland? Euſtathius obſerves, that experience teaches the contrary, and that it is only true of the greateſt part of the year; Homer, adds he, diſguiſes the true ſituation of the Phaeacians, and here deſcribes it as one of the happy iſlands; at once to inrich his poetry, and to avoid a diſcovery of his poetical exaggeration. The relation is true of other places, if Pliny and Theophraſtus deſerve credit, as Dacier obſerves; thus the

Four acres was th' allotted ſpace of ground,
Fenc'd with a green encloſure all around.
Tall thriving trees confeſs'd the fruitful mold;
The red'ning apple ripens here to gold;
Here the blue fig with luſcious juice o'erflows,
With deeper red the full pomegranate glows,
The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
And verdant olives flouriſh round the year.
The balmy ſpirit of the weſtern gale
Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail:

citron bears during the whole year fruits and flowers. *Arbos ipſa omnibus horis pomifera, aliis cadentibus, aliis matureſcentibus, aliis vero ſubnaſcentibus.* The ſame is related of other trees by Pliny: *Novuſque fructus in his cum Annotino pendet;* he affirms the like of the pine, *habet fructum matureſcentem, habet proximo anno ad maturitatem venturum, ac deinde tertio, etc.* So that what Homer relates is in itſelf true, though not entirely of Phaeacia. Or perhaps it might be only intended for a more beautiful and poetical manner of deſcribing the conſtant ſucceſſion of one fruit after another in a fertile climate.

——*Figs on figs ariſe.*

Ariſtotle applied this hemiſtic ſcoffingly to the ſycophants of Athens: he was about to leave that city upon its rejoicing at the death of Socrates; and, quoting this verſe, he ſaid he would not live in a place where

------ Γηράσκει σῦκον δ' ἐπὶ σύκῳ·

alluding to the derivation of the word ſycophant. Euſtathius.

Some dry the black'ning cluſters in the ſun.

To underſtand this paſſage aright, it is neceſſary to know the manner of ordering the vintage amongſt the

Each dropping pear a following pear ſupplies,
On apples apples, figs on figs ariſe;
The ſame mild ſeaſon gives the blooms to blow,
The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.

Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,
With all th' united labours of the year;
Some to unload the fertile branches run,
Some dry the black'ning cluſters in the ſun.

Greeks: Firſt, they carried all the grapes they gathered into an houſe for a ſeaſon; afterwards they expoſed them ten days to the ſun, and let them lie abroad as many nights in the freſhneſs of the air; then they kept them five days in cool ſhades, and on the ſixth they trod them, and put the wine into veſſels: this we learn from Heſiod: ἔρϛων, verſe 229.

---------Πάντας ἀπόδρεπε δικαδε βότρυς
Δεῖξαι δ' ἠελίῳ δέκα τ' ἤματα καὶ δέκα νύκτας
Πέντε δὲ συσκίασαι, ἕκτῳ δ' εἰς ἄγγε ἀφύσσαι
Δῶρα Διωνύσου πολυγηθέος------

Homer diſtinguiſhes the whole into three orders: Firſt, the grapes that have already been expoſed to the ſun are trod; the ſecond order is of the grapes that are expoſed, while the others are treading; and the third, of thoſe that are ripe to be gathered, while the others are thus ordering. Homer himſelf thus explains it, by ſaying, that while ſome vines were loaded with black and mature grapes, others were green, or but juſt turning to blackneſs. Homer undoubtedly founds this poetical relation upon obſerving ſome vines that bore fruit thrice annually. Pliny affirms this to be true, lib. 16. cap. 27. *Vites quidem et triferae ſunt, quas ob id inſanas vocant, quoniam in iis aliae matureſcunt, aliae turgeſcunt, aliae florent.* Dacier.

Others to tread the liquid harveſt join,
The groaning preſſes foam with floods of wine.
Here are the vines in early flow'r deſcry'd,
Here grapes diſcolour'd on the ſunny ſide,
And there in autumn's riches purple dy'd.
Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
In beauteous order terminate the ſcene.
Two plenteous fountains the whole proſpect crown'd;
This thro' the gardens leads its ſtreams around,
Viſits each plant, and waters all the ground:
While that in pipes beneath the palace flows;
And thence its current on the town beſtows;
To various uſe their various ſtreams they bring,
The people one, and one ſupplies the king.
Such were the glories which the gods ordain'd
To grace Alcinous, and his happy land.
Ev'n from the chief, who men and nations knew,
Th' unwonted ſcene ſurprize and rapture drew;
In pleaſing thought he ran the proſpect o'er,
Then haſty enter'd at the lofty door.
Night now approaching, in the palace ſtand,
With goblets crown'd, the rulers of the land;
Prepar'd for reſt, and off'ring to the * god
Who bears the virtue of the ſleepy rod.

* Mercury.

ỳ 184. *Prepar'd for reſt, and offering to the god*
Who bears the virtue of the ſleepy rod.]
I have already explained from Athenaeus this cuſtom of offering to Mercury at the concluſion of entertainments:

Unſeen he glided thro' the joyous croud,
With darkneſs circled, and an ambient cloud.
Direct to great Alcinous' throne he came,
And proſtrate fell before th' imperial dame.
Then from around him drop'd the veil of night;
Sudden he ſhines, and manifeſt to ſight.
The nobles gaze, with awful fear oppreſt;
Silent they gaze, and eye the god-like gueſt;
Daughter of great Rhexenor! (thus began
Low at her knees, the much-enduring man)
To thee, thy conſort, and this royal train,
To all that ſhare the bleſſings of your reign,

he was thought by the ancients to preſide over ſleep: *dat ſomnos adimitque*, according to Horace, as Dacier obſerves: in following ages this practice was altered, and they offered not to Mercury, but to Jove the Perfecter, or to Ζεῦς τέλειος.

℣. 190. *Then from around him drop'd the veil of night.*] If this whole ſtory of the veil of air had been told ſimply and nakedly, it would imply no more than that Ulyſſes arrived without being diſcovered; and the breaking of the veil denotes his firſt coming into ſight, in the preſence of the queen. But Homer ſteps out of the vulgar road of an hiſtorian, and clothes it with a ſublimity worthy of heroic poetry. In the ſame manner Virgil diſcovers his Æneas to Dido;

——*Cum circumfuſa repente*
Scindit ſe nubes, et in aera purgat opertum.

Scaliger prefers theſe verſes to thoſe of Homer, and perhaps with good reaſon; he calls the laſt part of the ſecond verſe a divine addition; and indeed it is far more beautiful than the θέσφατος ἀνὴρ of Homer.

℣. 196. *To thee, thy conſort, and this royal train.*]

A ſuppliant bends: oh pity human woe!
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe.
A wretched exile to his country ſend,
Long worn with griefs, and long without a friend.

Minerva commanded Ulyſſes to ſupplicate the queen: why then does he exceed the directions of the goddeſs, and not only addreſs himſelf to Alcinous, but to the reſt of the aſſembly? Spondanus anſwers, that Ulyſſes adapts himſelf to the preſent circumſtances, and ſeeing the king and other peers in the ſame aſſembly, he thought it improper not to take notice of them: he therefore addreſſes himſelf to all, that he may make all his friends. But then does not Minerva give improper directions? and is not Ulyſſes more wiſe than the goddeſs of wiſdom? The true reaſon therefore may perhaps be, that Ulyſſes really complies with the injunctions of the goddeſs: ſhe commands him to addreſs himſelf to the queen: and he does ſo: this I take to mean chiefly or primarily, but not excluſively of the king: if the paſſage be thus underſtood, it ſolves the objection.

ν. 200. *A wretched exile to his country ſend.*] Ulyſſes here ſpeaks very conciſely: and he may ſeem to break abruptly into the ſubject of his petition, without letting the audience either into the knowlege of his condition or perſon. Was this a proper method to prevail over an aſſemly of ſtrangers? But his geſture ſpoke for him, he threw himſelf into the poſture of a ſuppliant, and the perſons of all ſuppliants were eſteemed to be ſacred: he declared himſelf to be a man in calamity, and reſerves his ſtory to be told more at large, when the ſurprize of the Phaeacians at the ſudden appearance of a ſtranger was over; this conciſeneſs therefore is not blameable, but rather an inſtance of Homer's judgment, who knows when to be ſhort, and when to be copious.

So may the gods your better days increaſe,
And all your joys deſcend on all your race,
So reign for ever on your country's breaſt,
Your people bleſſing, by your people bleſt!
Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And humbled in the aſhes took his place.

ỳ. 207. *And humbled in the aſhes took his place.*] This was the cuſtom of ſuppliants: they betook themſelves to the hearth as ſacred, and a place of refuge. It was particularly in the protection of Veſta: thus Tully, lib. 2. *de Natura Deorum; Nomen Veſtae ſumptum eſt a Graecis, ea eſt enim quae illis ἑστία dicitur, juſque ejus ad aras et focos pertinet.* Apollonius likewiſe, as Spondanus obſerves, takes notice of this cuſtom of ſuppliants.

Τὼ δ' ἄντω, καὶ ἄναυδοι ἐφ' ἑστίῃ ἀΐξαντες
Ἵζανον, ἥτε δίκη λυγροῖς ἱκέτῃσι τέτυκται.

That is, they betook themſelves to the hearth, and there ſate mute, which is the cuſtom of all unhappy ſuppliants. If it was a cuſtom, as Apollonius obſerves, to ſit mute, this gives another reaſon why Ulyſſes uſed but few words in his ſupplication: he had greatly outraged a practice that was eſtabliſhed as ſacred amongſt the Greeks, and had not acted in the character of a ſuppliant, if he had launched out into a long oration.

This was the moſt ſure and effectual way of ſupplication; thus when Themiſtocles fled to Admetus king of the Moloſſians, he placed himſelf before the hearth, and was received, though that king had formerly vowed his deſtruction. Plutarch indeed calls it an unuſual way of ſupplication, but that proceeded from his carrying a child in his arms to move the greater compaſſion, not from his throwing himſelf into the protection of the houſhold-gods.

Silence

Silence enſu'd. The eldeſt firſt began,
Echeneus ſage, a venerable man!
Whoſe well taught mind the preſent age ſurpaſt,
And join'd to that th' experience of the laſt.
Fit words attended on his weighty ſenſe,
And mild perſuaſion flow'd in eloquence.
Oh ſight (he cry'd) diſhoneſt and unjuſt!
A gueſt, a ſtranger, ſeated in the duſt!
To raiſe the lowly ſuppliant from the ground
Befits a monarch. Lo! the peers around
But wait thy word, the gentle gueſt to grace
And ſeat him fair in ſome diſtinguiſh'd place.
Let firſt the herald due libation pay
To Jove, who guides the wand'rer on his way;
Then ſet the genial banquet in his view,
And give the ſtranger-gueſt a ſtranger's due.
His ſage advice the liſt'ning king obeys,
He ſtretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raiſe,
And from his ſeat Laodamas remov'd,
(The monarch's offspring, and his beſt belov'd)

ỳ. 209. *Echeneus ſage*, etc.] The expreſſion in the original, as Dacier obſerves, is remarkable: *Echeneus an old man, who knew many ancient, and great variety of things;* he was wiſe by long experience, and by being converſant in ancient ſtory: the author of the book of Wiſdom ſpeaks almoſt in the ſame expreſſions: *Scit praeterita et de futuris aeſtimat.*

ỳ. 226. *And from his ſeat Laodamas remov'd.*] Plutarch in his Sympoſiacs diſcuſſes a queſtion, whether the maſter of the feaſt ſhould place his gueſts, or let them

There next his ſide the god-like hero ſat;
With ſtars of ſilver ſhone the bed of ſtate.
The golden ew'r a beauteous handmaid brings,
Repleniſh'd from the cool tranſlucent ſprings,
Whoſe poliſh'd vaſe with copious ſtreams ſupplies
A ſilver laver, of capacious ſize.
The table next in regal order ſpread,
The glitt'ring caniſters are heap'd with bread:
Viands of various kinds invite the taſte,
Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour, rich repaſt!
Thus feaſting high, Alcinous gave the ſign
And bad the herald pour the roſy wine.
Let all around the due libation pay
To Jove, who guides the wand'rer on his way.
He ſaid. Pontonous heard the king's command;
The circling goblet moves from hand to hand;
Each drinks the juice that glads the heart of man.
Alcinous then, with aſpect mild, began.
Princes and peers, attend! while we impart
To you, the thoughts of no inhuman heart.

ſeat themſelves promiſcuouſly: he there commends this conduct of Alcinous, as an inſtance of a courteous diſpoſition and great humanity, who gave a place of dignity to a ſtranger and ſuppliant.

ν.240.—*The due libation pay to Jove.*] We have already ſeen that the whole aſſembly was about to pour libations to Mercury; whence is it then that they now offer to Jupiter? Euſtathius obſerves, it was becauſe of the arrival of this ſtranger, and Jupiter preſides over all ſtrangers, and is frequently ſtiled Ζεὺς ξένιος and Ζεὺς ἑστιοῦχος.

Now pleas'd and ſatiate from the ſocial rite
Repair we to the bleſſings of the night:
But with the riſing day, aſſembled here,
Let all the elders of the land appear,
Pious obſerve our hoſpitable laws,
And heav'n propitiate in the ſtranger's cauſe:
Then join'd in council, proper means explore
Safe to tranſport him to the wiſh'd-for ſhore:
(How diſtant that, imports not us to know,
Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe.)
Mean-time, nor harm nor anguiſh let him bear;
This interval, heav'n truſts him to our care,
But to his native land our charge reſign'd,
Heav'n is his life to come, and all the woes behind.
Then muſt he ſuffer what the fates ordain;
For fate has wove the thread of life with pain,
And twins ev'n from the birth, are miſery and man!
But if deſcended from th' Olympian bow'r,
Gracious approach us ſome immortal pow'r;
If in that form thou com'ſt a gueſt divine:
Some high event the conſcious gods deſign.
As yet, unbid they never grac'd our feaſt,
The ſolemn ſacrifice call'd down the gueſt;
Then manifeſt of heav'n the viſion ſtood,
And to our eyes familiar was the god.
Oft with ſome favoured traveller they ſtray,
And ſhine before him all the deſart way:
With ſocial intercourſe, and face to face,
The friends and guardians of our pious race.

So near approach we their celeſtial kind,
By juſtice, truth, and probity of mind;
As our dire neighbours of Cyclopean birth
Match in fierce wrong, the giant-ſons of earth.
Let no ſuch thought (with modeſt grace rejoin'd
The prudent Greek) poſſeſs the royal mind.

℣. 277. *So near approach we their celeſtial kind*, etc.] There is ſome intricacy in this paſſage, and much labour has been uſed to explain it. Some would have it to imply, that 'we are as nearly allied to the gods, as 'the Cyclops and giants, who are deſcended from 'them; and if the gods frequently appear to theſe gi-'ants who defy them; how much more may it be ex-'pected by the Phaeacians to enjoy that favour, who 'reverence and adore them?' Euſtathius explains it after another method; Alcinous had conceived a fixed hatred againſt the race of the Cyclops, who had expelled the Phaeacians from their country, and forced them to ſeek a new habitation; he here expreſſes that hatred, and ſays, that the Phaeacians reſemble the gods as much in goodneſs, as the Cyclops and giants one the other in impiety: he illuſtrates it, by ſhewing that the expreſſion has the ſame import as if we ſhould ſay that Socrates comes as near to Plato in virtue, as Anytus and Melitus to one another in wickedneſs; and indeed the conſtruction will be eaſy, by underſtanding Ἀλλήλοις in the ſecond verſe.

---------Σφίσιν ἐγγύθεν εἰμὲν,
Ὥσπερ κύκλωπές τε καὶ ἄγρια φῦλα γιγάντων.

Subaudi, ἐγγύθεν ἀλλήλοις εἰσὶν.

I have already ſpoken of the preſence of the gods at the ſacrifices, in a former note upon the Odyſſey: this frequent intercourſe of the gods was agreeable to the theology of the ancients; but why then is Alcinous

Alas! a mortal, like thyſelf, am I;
No glorious native of yon azure ſky:
In form, ah how unlike their heav'nly kind!
How more inferior in the gifts of mind!
Alas, a mortal! moſt oppreſt of thoſe
Whom fate has loaded with a weight of woes;
By a ſad train of miſeries alone
Diſtinguiſh'd long, and ſecond now to none!
By heav'n's high will compell'd from ſhore to ſhore;
With heav'n's high will prepar'd to ſuffer more.
What hiſtories of toil could I declare?
But ſtill long-weary'd nature wants repair;
Spent with fatigue, and ſhrunk with pining faſt,
My craving bowels ſtill require repaſt.
Howe'er the noble, ſuff'ring mind may grieve
Its load of anguiſh, and diſdain to live;
Neceſſity demands our daily bread;
Hunger is inſolent, and will be fed.
But finiſh, oh ye peers! what you propoſe,
And let the morrow's dawn conclude my woes.
Pleas'd will I ſuffer all the gods ordain,
To ſee my ſoil, my ſon, my friends, again.

ſurprized at the appearance of Ulyſſes, whom he looks upon as a god, if ſuch favours were frequent? Spondanus replies, that it is the unuſualneſs of the time, not the appearance, that ſurprizes Alcinous; the gods appeared either at their ſacrifices, or in their journies, and therefore he looks upon this viſit as a thing extraordinary.

That view vouchſaf'd, let inſtant death ſurprize
With ever-during ſhade theſe happy eyes!
Th' aſſembled peers with gen'ral praiſe approv'd
His pleaded reaſon, and the ſuit he mov'd.
Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
And to the gifts of balmy ſleep repairs.
Ulyſſes in the regal walls alone
Remain'd: beſide him, on a ſplendid throne,
Divine Arete and Alcinous ſhone.
The queen, on nearer view, the gueſt ſurvey'd
Rob'd in the garments her own hands had made;
Not without wonder ſeen. Then thus began,
Her words addreſſing to the god-like man.

v. 305. *That view vouchſafed, let inſtant death*, etc.] It is very neceſſary to recall frequently to the reader's mind the deſire Ulyſſes has to reach his own country; and to ſhew that he is abſent not by choice, but neceſſity; all the diſorders in his kingdoms happen by reaſon of his abſence: it is therefore neceſſary to ſet the deſire of his return in the ſtrongeſt point of light, that he may not ſeem acceſſary to thoſe diſorders, by being abſent when it was in his power to return. It is obſervable that Ulyſſes does not here make any mention of Penelope, whom he ſcarce ever omits in other places, as one of the chief inducements to wiſh for his country; the reaſon of his ſilence, ſays Euſtathius, is, becauſe he is unwilling to abate the favour of Alcinous, by a diſcovery that would ſhew it was impoſſible for him to marry his daughter; ſuch a diſcovery might make the king proceed more coolly towards his tranſportation; whereas it would afterwards be leſs dangerous, when he has had an opportunity fully to engage him in his favour.

Cam'ſt thou not hither, wond'rous ſtranger! ſay,
From lands remote, and o'er a length of ſea?
Tell then whence art thou? whence that princely air?
And robes like theſe, ſo recent and ſo fair?

Hard is the taſk, oh princeſs! you impoſe:
(Thus ſighing ſpoke the man of many woes)

v. 322. *Hard is the taſk, oh princeſs!*] Æneas in Virgil ſpeaks to Venus after the ſame manner, as Ulyſſes to Arete.

O Dea, ſi prima repetens ab origine pergam,
Et vacet annales noſtrorum audire laborum,
Ante diem clauſo componet veſper Olympo.

Scaliger obſerves that Virgil ſo far exceeds the verſes of Homer, that they will not even bear a compariſon: he is ſuperior almoſt in every word; for inſtance, he renders διηνεκέως, by *prima ab origine*, and adds the word *vacet* beautifully; and ſtill more beautifully he tranſlates πολλὰ κήδεα, *annales noſtrorum audire laborum;* and laſtly he paraphraſes the word ἀργαλέον by a moſt harmonious line,

Ante diem clauſo componet veſper Olympo.

Which excellently deſcribes the multitude of the ſufferings of Æneas, which could not be comprehended in the relation of a whole day.

I will not deny but that Virgil excells Homer in this and many other paſſages which he borrows from him: but then is it a juſt concluſion to infer, after the manner of Scaliger, that Virgil is a better poet than Homer? To conclude from particulars to generals is a falſe way of arguing. It is as if in a compariſon of two perſons, a man ſhould from ſingle features give a ſuperiority of beauty, which is only to be gathered from the ſymmetry of the whole body.

The long, the mournful ſeries to relate
Of all my ſorrows, ſent by heav'n and fate!
Yet what you aſk, attend. An iſland lies
Beyond theſe tracts, and under other ſkies,
Ogygia nam'd, in Ocean's watry arms:
Where dwells Calypſo, dreadful in her charms!

v. 326. *Yet what you aſk attend* ——] Homer here gives a ſummary of the ſubject of the two preceding books: this recapitulation cannot indeed be avoided, becauſe it is neceſſary to let Alcinous into his ſtory, and this cannot be done without a repetition; but generally all repetitions are tedious: the reader is offended when that is related which he knows already, he receives no new inſtruction to entertain his judgment, nor any new deſcriptions to excite his curioſity, and by theſe means the very ſoul of poetry is extinguiſhed, and it becomes unſpirited and lifeleſs. When therefore repetitions are abſolutely neceſſary, they ought always to be ſhort; and I may appeal to the reader if he is not tired with many in Homer, eſpecially when made in the very ſame words? Here indeed Ulyſſes tells his ſtory but in part; the queen aſked him who he was, but he paſſes over this without any reply, and reſerves the greateſt part of his ſtory to a time of more leiſure, that he may diſcover himſelf to a better advantage before the whole peerage of the Phaeacians. I do not always condemn even the verbal repetitions of Homer; ſometimes, as in embaſſies, they may be neceſſary, becauſe every word is ſtamped with authority, and perhaps they might be cuſtomary in Homer's time; if they were not, he had too fruitful an invention not to have varied his thoughts and expreſſions. Boſſu obſerves, that with reſpect to repetitions Virgil is more exact than Homer; for inſtance, in the firſt book of the Æneis, when Æ-

Remote from gods or men ſhe holds her reign,
Amid the terrors of the rowling main.
Me, only me, the hand of fortune bore
Unbleſt! to tread that interdicted ſhore:
When Jove tremendous in the ſable deeps
Launch'd his red lightning at our ſcatter'd ſhips:

neas is repeating his ſufferings to Venus, ſhe interrupts him to give him comfort;

——Nec plura querentem
Paſſa Venus, medio ſic interfata dolore eſt.

and in the third book, where good manners obliged this hero to relate his ſtory at the requeſt of Andromache, the poet prevents it by introducing Helenus, who hinders the repetition.

ỳ. 330. *Remote from gods or men ſhe holds her reign.*] Homer has the ſecret art of introducing the beſt inſtructions, in the midſt of the plaineſt narrations. He has deſcribed the unworthy paſſion of the goddeſs Calypſo, and the indecent advances ſhe made to detain him from his country. It is poſſible this relation might make ſome impreſſions upon the mind of the reader, inconſiſtent with exact morality: what antidote then does Homer adminiſter to expell this poiſon? He does not content himſelf with ſetting the chaſtity of Penelope in oppoſition to the looſe deſires of Calypſo, and ſhewing the great advantage the mortal has over the goddeſs; but he here diſcovers the fountain from whence this weakneſs riſes, by ſaying, that neither man nor gods frequented this iſland; on one hand the abſence of the gods, and on the other the infrequency of objects made her yield at the ſight of the firſt that appears. Every object is dangerous in ſolitude, eſpecially as Homer expreſſes it, if we have no commerce with the gods. Dacier.

Then, all my fleet, and all my foll'wers loſt,
Sole on a plank, on boiling ſurges toſt,
Heav'n drove my wreck th' Ogygian iſle to find,
Full nine days floating to the wave and wind.
Met by the goddeſs there with open arms,
She brib'd my ſtay with more than human charms;
Nay promis'd, vainly promis'd, to beſtow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
But all her blandiſhments ſucceſsleſs prove,
To baniſh from my breaſt my country's love.
I ſtay reluctant ſev'n continu'd years,
And water her ambroſial couch with tears.
The eighth, ſhe voluntary moves to part,
Or urg'd by Jove, or her own changeful heart.
A raft was form'd to croſs the ſurging ſea;
Herſelf ſupply'd the ſtores and rich array;
And gave the gales to waft me on the way.
In ſev'nteen days appear'd your pleaſing coaſt,
And woody mountains half in vapours loſt.

ỳ. 344. *But all her blandiſhments ſucceſsleſs prove,*—] Dacier from Euſtathius aſſigns the reaſon of the refuſal of Ulyſſes to comply with the proffers of Calypſo, to forſake his wife and country: it was, becauſe he knew that women in love promiſe more than they either can, or intend to perform. An inſinuation, that he would have complied if he had thought the goddeſs would, or could have perform'd her promiſes. But this is contrary to the character of Ulyſſes, whoſe greateſt glory it is, not to have liſtened even to a goddeſs. In this view he ceaſes to be an hero, and his return is no long-

Joy touch'd my ſoul: my ſoul was joy'd in vain,
For angry Neptune rouz'd the raging main;
The wild winds whiſtle, and the billows roar;
The ſplitting raft the furious tempeſt tore;
And ſtorms vindictive intercept the ſhore.
Soon as their rage ſubſides, the ſeas I brave
With naked force, and ſhoot along the wave,
To reach this iſle: but there my hopes were loſt,
The ſurge impell'd me on a craggy coaſt.
I choſe the ſafer ſea, and chanc'd to find
A river's mouth impervious to the wind,
And clear of rocks. I fainted by the flood;
Then took the ſhelter of the neighb'ring wood.
'Twas night; and cover'd in the foliage deep,
Jove plung'd my ſenſes in the death of ſleep.
All night I ſlept, oblivious of my pain:
Aurora dawn'd, and Phoebus ſhin'd in vain,
Nor 'till oblique he ſlop'd his evening ray,
Had Somnus dry'd the balmy dews away.
Then female voices from the ſhore I heard:
A maid amidſt them, goddeſs-like, appear'd:
To her I ſu'd, ſhe pity'd my diſtreſs;
Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue leſs.
Who from ſuch youth cou'd hope conſid'rate care?
In youth and beauty wiſdom is but rare!

er a virtue, but he returns only becauſe he found not a temptation ſufficient to keep him from his country.

℣. 379. *In youth and beauty wiſdom is but rare.*] In the preceding line Ulyſſes ſpeaks of Nauſicaa, yet imme-

She gave me life, reliev'd with juſt ſupplies
My wants, and lent theſe robes that ſtrike your eyes.
This is the truth: and oh ye Pow'ers on high!
Forbid that want ſhou'd ſink me to a lye.

To this the king. Our daughter but expreſt
Her cares imperfect to our god-like gueſt.

diately changes the words into the maſculine gender, for grammatically it ought to be νεωτέρην ἀνίασασαν. Homer makes this alteration to pay the greater compliment to Nauſicaa, and he intends to expreſs by it, that neither woman nor man of her years could be expected to have ſuch remarkable diſcretion. Euſtath.

Such ſentences being very frequent in the Odyſſey; it may not be improper to obſerve, of what beauty a ſentence is in epic poetry. A ſentence may be defined, a moral inſtruction couched in a few words. Rapin aſſerts, that ſentences are more proper in dramatic than heroic poetry: for narration is the eſſential character of it, and it ought to be one continued thread of diſcourſe, ſimple and natural, without an affectation of figures, or moral reflections: that energy which ſome pretend to collect and incloſe within a ſmall compaſs of words, is wont extremely to weaken the reſt of the diſcourſe, and give it a forced air: it ſeems to jut out of the ſtructure of the poem, and to be independent of it: he blames Homer for ſcattering his ſentences too plentifully through his poeſy, and calls it an affectation and imperfection. Theſe objections would undoubtedly be of weight, if the ſentences were ſo introduced as to break the thread of narration, as Rapin rightly obſerves. But is this the caſe with relation to Homer? He puts them into the mouth of the actors themſelves, and the narration goes on without the leaſt interruption: it is not the poet who ſpeaks, nor does he ſuſpend the narration to make a refined reflection, or give us a ſentence of mora-

Suppliant

Suppliant to her, ſince firſt he choſe to pray,
Why not herſelf did ſhe conduct the way,
And with her handmaids to our court convey?

Hero and king! (Ulyſſes thus reply'd)
Nor blame her faultleſs, nor ſuſpect of pride:
She bad me follow in th' attendant train;
But fear and rev'rence did my ſteps detain,
Leſt raſh ſuſpicion might alarm thy mind:
Man's of a jealous and miſtaking kind.

lity. Is his poetry the worſe, becauſe he makes his agents ſpeak weightily and ſententiouſly? It is true, ſentences uſed without moderation are abſurd in epic poetry; they give it a ſeriouſneſs that is more becoming the gravity of philoſophers, than the ſpirit and majeſty of poetry. Boſſu judiciouſly obſerves, that ſuch thoughts have in their very nature a certain kind of calm wiſdom that is contrary to the paſſions; but ſays he, ſentences make a poem uſeful, and it ſeems natural to imagine, that the more a work is embelliſhed with them, the more it deſerves that general approbation which Horace promiſes to thoſe who have the art to mix the profitable with the pleaſant. In ſhort, ſentences are not only allowable but beautiful in heroic poetry, if they are introduced with propriety, and without affectation.

℣. 391. *She bade me follow*———
But fear and rev'rence, etc.

This is directly contrary to what is before aſſerted in the preceding book, where Nauſicaa forbids Ulyſſes to attend her, to avoid ſuſpicion and ſlander. Is not Ulyſſes then guilty of falſhood, and is not falſhood beneath the character of a hero? Euſtathius confeſſes that Ulyſſes is guilty φανερῶς ψεύδεται. and he adds, that a wiſe man may do ſo ſometimes opportunely. Ὅπερ ἂν ποιήσει ἐν καιρῷ ὁ σοφός. I fear this conceſſion

Far from my ſoul (he cry'd) the gods efface
All wrath ill grounded, and ſuſpicion baſe!
Whate'er is honeſt, ſtranger, I approve,
And would to Phoebus, Pallas, and to Jove,
Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my ſon.

of the biſhop's would not paſs for good caſuiſtry in theſe ages. Spondanus is of the ſame opinion as Euſtathius; *Vir prudens certo loco et tempore mendaciis officioſiſſimis uti novit.* Dacier confeſſes that he ſomewhat diſguiſes the truth. It will be difficult to vindicate Ulyſſes from the imputation, if the notions of truth and falſhood were as ſtrict in former, as in theſe ages; but we muſt not meaſure by this ſtandard: it is certain that anciently lying was reckoned no crime by a whole nation; and it ſtill bears a diſpute, *an omne falſi-loquium ſit mendacium?* Some caſuiſts allow of the *officioſum mendacium*, and ſuch is this of Ulyſſes, intirely complemental and officious.

ỳ. 400. *Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my ſon*——] The ancients obſerve, that Alcinous very artfully inſerts this propoſition to Ulyſſes, to prove his veracity. If he had imbraced it without heſitation, he would have concluded him an impoſtor: for it is not conceivable that he ſhould reject all the temptation to marriage made him by Calypſo a goddeſs, and yet immediately imbrace this offer of Alcinous to marry his daughter. But if we take the paſſage in another ſenſe, and believe that Alcinous ſpoke ſincerely without any ſecret ſuſpicions, yet his conduct is juſtifiable. It has I confeſs appeared ſhocking, that Alcinous, a king, ſhould at the very firſt interview offer his daughter to a ſtranger, who might be a vagrant and impoſtor: but examples are frequent in antiquity of marriages thus concluded between ſtrangers, and with as little heſitation: thus Bellerophon, Tydeus, and Polinyces were married. Great

In ſuch alliance could'ſt thou wiſh to join,
A palace ſtor'd with treaſures ſhou'd be thine.
But if reluctant, who ſhall force thy ſtay?
Jove bids to ſet the ſtranger on his way,
And ſhips ſhall wait thee with the morning ray.
'Till then let ſlumber cloſe thy careful eyes;
The wakeful mariners ſhall watch the ſkies,
And ſeize the moment when the breezes riſe:
Then gently waft thee to the pleaſing ſhore,
Where thy ſoul reſts, and labour is no more.
Far as Eubaea tho' thy country lay,
Our ſhips with eaſe tranſport thee in a day.
Thither of old, earth's * giant-ſon to view,
On wings of winds with Rhadamanth they flew:

* Tityus.

perſonages regarded not riches, but were only ſolicitous to procure worthy huſbands for their daughters, and birth and virtue were the beſt recommendations.

It is obſervable that in the original there is a chaſm, an infinitive mood without any thing to govern it; we muſt therefore ſupply the word ἐθέλοις to make it right conſtruction. Euſtathius.

℣. 411. *Far as Eubaea tho' thy country lay.*] Eubaea, as Euſtathius obſerves, is really far diſtant from Corcyra, the country of the Phaeacians: but Alcinous ſtill makes it more diſtant, by placing it in another part of the world, and deſcribing it as one of the fortunate iſlands: for in the fourth book Radamanthus is ſaid to inhabit the Elyſian fields. Alcinous therefore endeavours to have it believed that his iſle is near thoſe fields, by aſſerting that Radamanthus made uſe of Phaeacian veſſels in his voyage to Tityus. Euſtathius further adds,

This land, from whence their morning courſe begun,
Saw them returning with the ſetting ſun.
Your eyes ſhall witneſs and confirm my tale,
Our youth how dext'rous, and how fleet our ſail,

that Radamanthus was a prince of great juſtice, and Tityus a perſon of great impiety, and that he made this voyage to bring him over to more virtuous diſpoſitions.

ỳ. 415. *The land from whence their morning courſe begun,*
Saw them returning with the ſetting ſun.] If Homer had given the true ſituation of Corcyra as it really lies oppoſite to Epirus, yet the hyperbole of ſailing thence to Eubaea and returning in the ſame day, had been utterly an impoſſibility; for in ſailing thither they muſt paſs the Ionian and Icarian ſeas, and double the Peloponneſus. But the fiction is yet more extravagant, by the poet's placing it ſtill more diſtant near the Fortunate iſlands. But what is impoſſible for veſſels to effect, that are as ſwift as birds, and can ſail with the rapidity of a thought? Euſtathius.

But then is the poet juſtifiable for relating ſuch incredible amplifications? It may be anſwered, if he had put theſe extravagancies into the mouth of Ulyſſes, he had been unpardonable, but they ſuit well with the character of Alcinous: they let Ulyſſes into his diſpoſition, and he appears to be ignorant, credulous, and oſtentatious. This was neceſſary, that Ulyſſes might know how to adapt himſelf to his humour, and engage his aſſiſtance; and this he actually brings about by raiſing his wonder and eſteem by ſtories, that could not fail to pleaſe ſuch an ignorant and credulous perſon as Alcinous.

Dacier adds, that the Phaeacians were ſo puffed up with their conſtant felicity and the protection of the gods, that they thought nothing impoſſible; upon this opinion all theſe hyperboles are founded: and this a-

When juſtly tim'd with equal ſweep they row,
And ocean whitens in long tracts below.
Thus he. No word th' experienc'd man replies,
But thus to heav'n (and heav'nward lifts his eyes)
O Jove! oh father! what the king accords
Do thou make perfect! ſacred be his words!
Wide o'er the world Alcinous' glory ſhine!
Let fame be his, and ah! my country mine!
Mean time Arete, for the hour of reſt
Ordains the fleecy couch, and cov'ring veſt:
Bids her fair train the purple quilts prepare,
And the thick carpets ſpread with buſy care.
With torches blazing in their hands they paſt,
And finiſh'd all their queen's command with haſte:

grees too well with human nature; the more happy men are, the more high and extravagantly they talk, and are too apt to entertain themſelves with wild chimaera's which have no exiſtence but in the imagination.

The moral then to theſe fables of Alcinous is, that a conſtant ſeries of happineſs intoxicates the mind, and that moderation is often learned in the ſchool of adverſity.

℣. 423. *The prayer of Ulyſſes.*] It is obſervable, that Ulyſſes makes no reply directly to the obliging propoſition which the king made concerning his daughter. A refuſal might have been diſadvantageous to his preſent circumſtances, yet an anſwer is implyed in this prayer, which ſhews the impatience he has to return to his country, and the gratitude he feels for his promiſes to effect it: and conſequently it diſcovers that he has no intentions of ſettling with his daughter amongſt the Phaeacians. Dacier.

Then gave the ſignal to the willing gueſt:
He roſe with pleaſure, and retir'd to reſt.
There, ſoft extended, to the murm'ring ſound
Of the high porch, Ulyſſes ſleeps profound!
Within, releas'd from cares Alcinous lies;
And faſt beſide, were clos'd Arete's eyes.

℣. 437, 438. *The laſt lines.*] It may ſeem ſomewhat extraordinary, that Alcinous and his queen who have been deſcribed as patterns of conjugal happineſs ſhould ſleep in diſtinct beds. Jupiter and Juno, as Dacier obſerves from the firſt of the Iliad, have the ſame bed. Perhaps the poet deſigned to ſhew the luxury and falſe delicacy of thoſe too happy Phaeacians, who lived in ſuch ſoftneſs that they ſhunned every thing that might prove troubleſome or incommodious.

This book takes up no longer time than the evening of the thirty-ſecond day.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Alcinous calls a council, in which it is reſolved to tranſport Ulyſſes into his country. After which ſplendid entertainments are made, where the celebrated muſician and poet Demodocus plays and ſings to the gueſts. They next proceed to the games, the race, the wreſtling, diſcus, etc. *where Ulyſſes caſts a prodigious length, to the admiration of all the ſpectators. They return again to the banquet, and Demodocus ſings the loves of Mars and Venus. Ulyſſes, after a compliment to the poet, deſires him to ſing the introduction of the wooden horſe into Troy; which ſubject provoking his tears, Alcinous inquires of his gueſt, his name, parentage and fortunes.*

NOW fair Aurora lifts her golden ray,
And all the ruddy orient flames with day:

This book has been more ſeverely cenſured by the critics than any in the whole Odyſſey: it may therefore be thought neceſſary to lay before the reader what may be offered in the poet's vindication.

Scaliger in his Poetics is very warm againſt it. Demodocus, obſerves that critic, ſings the luſt of the gods *(ſoeditates)* at the feaſt of Alcinous. And Boſſu, though he vindicates the poet, remarks that we meet ſome offenſive paſſages in Homer, and inſtances in the adultery of Mars and Venus.

To know (ſays Ariſtotle in his Art of Poetry) whe-

Alcinous, and the chief, with dawning light,
Roſe inſtant from the ſlumbers of the night;

ther a thing be well or ill ſpoken, we muſt not only examine the thing whether it be good or ill, but we muſt alſo have regard to him that ſpeaks or acts, and to the perſon to whom the poet addreſſes; for the character of the perſon who ſpeaks, and of him to whom he ſpeaks, makes that to be good, which would not come well from the mouth of any other perſon. It is on this account we vindicate Homer with reſpect to the immorality that is found in the fable of the adultery of Mars and Venus: we muſt conſider that it is neither the poet, nor his hero, that recites that ſtory: but a Phaeacian ſings it to Phaeacians, a ſoft effeminate people, at a feſtival. Beſides, it is allowable even in grave and moral writings to introduce vicious perſons, who deſpiſe the gods; and is not the poet obliged to adapt his poetry to the characters of ſuch perſons? And had it not been an abſurdity in him to have given us a philoſophical or moral ſong before a people who would be pleaſed with nothing but gaiety and effeminacy? The moral that we are to draw from this ſtory is, that an idle and ſoft courſe of life is the ſource of all criminal pleaſures; and that thoſe perſons who lead ſuch lives, are generally pleaſed to hear ſuch ſtories, as make their betters partakers in the ſame vices. This relation of Homer is a uſeful leſſon to them who deſire to live virtuouſly; and it teaches, that if we would not be guilty of ſuch vices, we muſt avoid ſuch a method of life as inevitably leads to the practice of them.

Rapin attacks this book on another ſide, and blames it not for its immorality, but lowneſs. Homer, ſays he, puts off that air of grandeur and majeſty which ſo properly belongs to his character, he debaſes himſelf into a droll, and ſinks into a familiar way of talking: he turns things into ridicule, by endeavouring to entertain his reader with ſomething pleaſant and diverting: for

Then to the council ſeat they bend their way,
And fill the ſhining thrones along the bay.

Mean-while Minerva in her guardian care
Shoots from the ſtarry vault thro' fields of air;
In form a herald of the king ſhe flies
From peer to peer, and thus inceſſant cries.

inſtance, in the eighth book of the Odyſſey, he entertains the gods with a comedy, ſome of whom he makes buffoons; Mars and Venus are introduced upon the ſtage, taken in a net laid by Vulcan, contrary to the gravity which is eſſential to epic poetry.

It muſt be granted, that the gods are here painted in colours unworthy of deities, yet ſtill with propriety, if we reſpect the ſpectators, who are ignorant, debauched Phaeacians. Homer was obliged to draw them not according to his own idea of the gods, but according to the wild fancies of the Phaeacians. The poet is not at liberty to aſcribe the wiſdom of a Socrates to Alcinous: he muſt follow nature, and like a painter he may draw deities or monſters, and introduce as he pleaſes either vicious or virtuous characters, provided he always makes them of a piece, conſiſtent with their firſt repreſentation.

This rule of Ariſtotle in general vindicates Homer, and it is neceſſary to carry it in our minds, becauſe it ought to be applied to all incidents that relate to the Phaeacians, in the ſequel of the Odyſſey.

℣. 6. *And fill the ſhining thrones along the bay.*] This place of council was between the two ports, where the temple of Neptune ſtood; probably, like that in the ſecond book, open to the air.

℣. 9. *In form a herald.*——] It may be aſked what occaſion there is to introduce a goddeſs, to perform an action that might have been as well executed by a real herald? Euſtathius obſerves, that this Minerva is either Fame, which informs the Phaeacians that a ſtranger of

Nobles and chiefs who rule Phaeacia's ſtates,
The king in council your attendance waits:
A prince of grace divine your aid implores,
O'er unknown ſeas arriv'd from unknown ſhores.
She ſpoke, and ſudden with tumultuous ſounds
Of thronging multitudes the ſhore rebounds:
At once the ſeats they fill: and every eye
Gaz'd, as before ſome brother of the ſky.
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
More high he treads, and more inlarg'd he moves:

uncommon figure is arrived, and upon this report they aſſemble; or it implies, that this aſſembly was made by the wiſdom of the peers, and conſequently a poet may aſcribe it to the goddeſs of wiſdom, it being the effect of her inſpiration.

The poet by the introduction of a deity warns us, that ſomething of importance is to ſucceed; this is to be uſhered in with ſolemnity, and conſequently the appearance of Minerva in this place is not unneceſſary: the action of importance to be deſcribed is no leſs than the change of the fortunes of Ulyſſes; it is from this aſſembly that his affairs take a new turn, and haſten to a happy re-eſtabliſhment.

ϒ. 13. *A prince of form divine*———] Minerva ſpeaks thus in favour of Ulyſſes, to excite the curioſity of the Phaeacians: and indeed the ſhort ſpeech is excellently adapted to this purpoſe. They were fond of ſtrangers: the goddeſs therefore tells them, that a ſtranger is arrived of a god-like appearance. They admired outward ſhow, he is therefore deſcribed as a man of extraordinary beauty, and Minerva for this reaſon immediately improves it. Euſtathius.

ϒ. 19. *Pallas with grace divine his form improves.*] This circumſtance has been repeated ſeveral times almoſt

She ſheds celeſtial bloom, regard to draw,
And gives a dignity of mien, to awe,
With ſtrength the future prize of fame to play,
And gather all the honours of the day.

Then from his glitt'ring throne Alcinous roſe:
Attend, he cry'd, while we our will diſcloſe,

in the ſame words, ſince the beginning of the Odyſſey. I cannot be of opinion that ſuch repetitions are beauties. In any other poet, they might have been thought to proceed from a poverty of invention, though certainly not in Homer, in whom there is rather a ſuperfluity than barrenneſs. Perhaps having once ſaid a thing well, he deſpaired of improving it, and ſo repeated it; or perhaps he intended to inculcate this truth, that all our accompliſhments, as beauty, ſtrength, *etc.* are the gifts of the gods; and being willing to fix it upon the mind, he dwells upon it, and inſerts it in many places. Here indeed it has a particular propriety, as it is a circumſtance that firſt ingages the Phaeacians in the favour of Ulyſſes: his beauty was his firſt recommendation, and conſequently the poet with great judgment ſets his hero off to the beſt advantage, it being an incident from which he dates all his future happineſs; and therefore to be inſiſted upon with a particular ſolemnity. Plato in his Theaetetus applies the latter part of this deſcription to Parmenides. Αἰδοῖός τε μοι φαίνεσθαι εἶναι ἅμα δεινός τε.

℣. 25. *From his glitt'ring throne Alcinous roſe.*] It might be expected that Ulyſſes, upon whoſe account alone Alcinous calls this aſſembly, ſhould have made his condition known, and ſpoken himſelf to the Phaeacians; whereas he appears upon the ſtage as a mute perſon, and the multitude departs intirely ignorant of his name and fortunes. It may be anſwered, that this was not a proper time for a fuller diſcovery, the poet defers

Your preſent aid this god-like ſtranger craves,
Toſt by rude tempeſt thro' a war of waves:
Perhaps from realms that view the riſing day,
Or nations ſubject to the weſtern ray.
Then grant, what here all ſons of woe obtain,
(For here affliction never pleads in vain:)
Be choſen youths prepar'd, expert to try
The vaſt profound, and bid the veſſel fly:
Launch the tall bark, and order ev'ry oar,
Then in our court indulge the genial hour;

it till Ulyſſes had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the games, and fully raiſed their curioſity. It is for the ſame reaſon that Ulyſſes is ſilent; if he had ſpoken, he could not have avoided to let them into the knowlege of his condition, but the contrary method is greatly for his advantage, and aſſures him of ſucceſs from the recommendation of a king.

But there is another, and perhaps a better reaſon, to be given for this ſilence of Ulyſſes: the poet reſerves the whole ſtory of his ſufferings for an intire and uninterrupted narration; if he had now made any diſcovery he muſt afterwards either have fallen into tautology, or broken the thread of the relation, ſo that it would not have been of a piece, but wanted continuity. Beſides, it comes with more weight at once, than if it had been made at ſeveral times, and conſequently makes a deeper impreſſion upon the memory and paſſion of the auditors. Virgil has taken a different method in the diſcovery of Æneas; there was a neceſſity for it; his companions, to ingage Dido in their protection, tell her they belong to no leſs a hero than Æneas, ſo that he is in a manner known before he appears; but Virgil after the example of Homer reſerves his ſtory for an intire narration.

ỳ. 35. *Launch the tall bark*———] The word in

Inſtant

Inſtant you ſailors to this taſk attend;
Swift to the palace, all ye peers aſcend;
Let none to ſtrangers honours due diſclaim;
Be there Demodocus, the bard of fame,
Taught by the gods to pleaſe, when high he ſings
The vocal lay reponſive to the ſtrings.

Thus ſpoke the prince: th' attending peers obey,
In ſtate they move; Alcinous leads the way:
Swift to Demodocus the herald flies,
At once the ſailors to their charge ariſe:
They launch the veſſel, and unfurl the ſails,
And ſtretch the ſwelling canvas to the gales;
Then to the palace move: a gath'ring throng,
Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along:

the original is πρωτόπλοος; which ſignifies not only a ſhip that makes its firſt voyage, but a ſhip that outſails other ſhips, as Euſtathius obſerves. It is not poſſible for a tranſlator to retain ſuch ſingularities with any beauty; it would ſeem pedantry and affectation, and not poetry.

℣. 41. *Taught by the gods to pleaſe*——] Homer here inſinuates that all good and great qualities are the gifts of God. He ſhews us likewiſe, that muſic was conſtantly made uſe of in the courts of all the oriental princes; we have ſeen Phemius in Ithaca, a ſecond in Lacedaemon with Menelaus, and Demodocus here with Alcinous. The Hebrews were likewiſe of remarkable ſkill in muſic; every one knows what effect the harp of David had upon the ſpirit of Saul. Solomon tells us, that he ſought out ſinging men and ſinging women to entertain him, like theſe in Homer, at the time of feaſting: thus another oriental writer compares muſic

Now all acceſſes to the dome are fill'd;
Eight boars, the choiceſt of the herd, are kill'd;
Two beeves, twelve fatlings from the flock they bring
To crown the feaſt; ſo wills the bounteous king.
The herald now arrives, and guides along
The ſacred maſter of celeſtial ſong:
Dear to the muſe! who gave his days to flow
With mighty bleſſings, mix'd with mighty woe:

at feaſts to an emerald incloſed in gold; *as a ſignet of an emerald ſet in a work of gold, ſo is the melody of muſic with pleaſant wine.* Eccl. xxxii. 6. Dacier.

℣. 57. *Dear to the muſe! who gave his days to flow*
With mighty bleſſings, mix'd with mighty woe.]
It has been generally thought that Homer repreſents himſelf in the perſon of Domodocus: and Dacier imagines that this paſſage gave occaſion to the ancients to believe that Homer was blind. But that he really was blind is teſtified by himſelf in his hymn to Apollo, which Thucydides aſſerts to be the genuine production of Homer, and quotes it as ſuch in his hiſtory.

Ὦ κοῦραι τίς δ' ὑμμιν ἀνὴρ ἥδιστος ἀοιδῶν
Ἐνθάδε πωλεῖται καὶ τῷ τέρπισθε μάλιστα;
Ὑμεῖς δ' ἴυ μάλα πᾶσαι ὑποκρίνασθε ἀφ' ὑμέων
Τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ-------

That is, 'O virgins, if any perſon aſks you who is he, 'the moſt pleaſing of all poets, who frequents this 'place, and who is he who moſt delights you? reply, 'he is a blind man, *etc.*' It is true, as Euſtathius obſerves, that there are many features in the two poets that bear a great reſemblance; Demodocus ſings divinely, the ſame is true of Homer; Demodocus ſings the adventures of the Greeks before Troy, ſo does Homer in his Iliads.

If this be true, it muſt be allowed that Homer has

With clouds of darkneſs quench'd his viſual ray,
But gave him ſkill to raiſe the lofty lay.
High on a radiant throne ſublime in ſtate,
Encircled by huge multitudes, he ſate:
With ſilver ſhone the throne; his lyre well ſtrung
To rapturous ſounds, at hand Pontonous hung:
Before his ſeat a poliſh'd table ſhines,
And a full goblet foams with gen'rous wines:
His food a herald bore: and now they fed;
And now the rage of craving hunger fled.
Then fir'd by all the muſe, aloud he ſings
The mighty deeds of demigods and kings:
From that fierce wrath the noble ſong aroſe,
That made Ulyſſes and Achilles foes:

found out a way of commending himſelf very artfully: had he ſpoken plainly, he had been extravagantly vain; but by this indirect way of praiſe, the reader is at liberty to apply it either ſolely to Domodocus, or obliquely to Homer.

It is remarkable, that Homer takes a very extraordinary care of Demodocus his brother poet; and introduces him as a perſon of great diſtinction. He calls him in this book the hero Demodocus: he places him on a throne ſtudded with ſilver, and gives him an herald for his attendant; nor is he leſs careful to provide for his entertainment, he has a particular table, and a capacious bowl ſet before him to drink as often as he had a mind, as the original expreſſes it. Some merry wits have turned the laſt circumſtance into raillery, and inſinuate that Homer in this place as well as in the former means himſelf in the perſon of Domodocus, an intimation that he would not be diſpleaſed to meet with the like hoſpitality.

How o'er the feaſt they doom the fall of Troy;
The ſtern debate Atrides hears with joy:
For heav'n foretold the conteſt, when he trod
The marble threſhold of the Delphic god,
Curious to learn the counſels of the ſky,
Ere yet he loos'd the rage of war on Troy.
Touch'd at the ſong, Ulyſſes ſtrait reſign'd
To ſoft affliction all his manly mind:

℣. 74. *The ſtern debate Atrides heard with joy.*] This paſſage is not without obſcurity, but Euſtathius thus explains it from Athenaeus. In the Iliads the generals ſup with Agamemnon with ſobriety and moderation; and if in the Odyſſey we ſee Achilles and Ulyſſes in contention to the great ſatisfaction of Agamemnon, it is becauſe theſe contentions are of uſe to his affairs; they contend whether force or ſtratagem is to be employed to take Troy; Achilles after the death of Hector, perſuaded to aſſault it by ſtorm, Ulyſſes by ſtratagem. There is a further reaſon given for the ſatisfaction which Agamemnon expreſſes at the conteſt of theſe two heroes: before the opening of the war of Troy he conſulted the oracle concerning the iſſue of it; Apollo anſwered, that Troy ſhould be taken when two princes moſt renowned for wiſdom and valour ſhould contend at a ſacrifice of the gods; Agamemnon rejoices to ſee the prediction fulfilled, knowing that the deſtruction of Troy was at hand, the oracle being accompliſhed by the conteſt of Ulyſſes and Achilles.

℣. 79. *Touch'd at the ſong*——] Many objections may be made againſt this relation; it may ſeem to offend againſt probability, and appears ſomewhat incredible, that Domodocus ſhould thus luckily pitch upon the war of Troy for the ſubject of his ſong, and ſtill more happily upon the deeds of Ulyſſes; for inſtance, a man may die of an apoplexy, this is probable; but that

Before his eyes the purple veſt he drew,
Induſtrious to conceal the falling dew:
But when the muſic paus'd, he ceas'd to ſhed
The flowing tear, and rais'd his drooping head:

this ſhould happen juſt when the poet has occaſion for it, is in ſome degree incredible. But this objection will ceaſe, if we will conſider not only that the war of Troy was the greateſt event of thoſe ages, and conſequently might be the common ſubject of entertainment; but alſo that it is not Homer or Demodocus who relates the ſtory, but the muſe who inſpires it: Homer ſeveral times in this book aſcribes the ſong to immediate inſpiration; and this ſupernatural aſſiſtance reconciles it to human probability, and the ſtory becomes credible when it is ſuppoſed to be related by a deity. Ariſtotle in his Poetics commends this conduct as artful and judicious; Alcinous, ſays he, invites Ulyſſes to an entertainment to divert him, where Demodocus ſings his actions, at which he cannot refrain from tears, which Alcinous perceives, and this brings about the diſcovery of Ulyſſes.

It may further be objected, that a ſufficient cauſe for this violence of tears is not apparent; for why ſhould Ulyſſes weep to hear his own brave atchievements, eſpecially when nothing calamitous is recited? This indeed would be improbable, if that were the whole of what the poet ſung: but Homer only gives us the heads of the ſong, a few ſketches of a larger draught, and leaves ſomething to be filled up by the imagination of the reader. Thus for inſtance, the words of Demodocus recalled to the mind of Ulyſſes all the hardſhips he had undergone during a ten years war, all the ſcenes of horror he had beheld, and the loſs and ſufferings of all his friends. And no doubt he might weep even for the calamities he brought upon Troy; an ingenuous nature cannot be inſenſible when any of its own ſpecies ſuffers; the Trojans were his enemies, but ſtill they were men,

And lifting to the gods a goblet crown'd,
He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.

Tranſported with the ſong, the liſt'ning train
Again with loud applauſe demand the ſtrain:
Again Ulyſſes veil'd his penſive head,
Again unmann'd a ſhow'r of ſorrow ſhed:
Conceal'd he wept: the king obſerved alone
The ſilent tear, and heard the ſecret groan:
Then to the bard aloud: O ceaſe to ſing,
Dumb be thy voice, and mute th' harmonious ſtring;
Enough the feaſt has pleas'd, enough the pow'r
Of heav'nly ſong has crown'd the genial hour!
Inceſſant in the games your ſtrength diſplay,
Conteſt, ye brave, the honours of the day!
That pleas'd th' admiring ſtranger may proclaim
In diſtant regions the Phaeacian fame:
None wield the gauntlet with ſo dire a ſway,
Or ſwifter in the race devour the way:

and compaſſion is due even to unfortunate enemies. I doubt not but it will be allowed, that there is here ſufficient cauſe to draw tears from a hero, unleſs a hero muſt be ſuppoſed to be diveſted of humanity.

ỳ. 101. *None wield the gauntlet with ſo dire a ſway.*] Euſtathius aſks how Alcinous could make ſuch an aſſertion, and give the preference to his people before all nations, when he neither knew, nor was known to, any heroes out of his own iſland? He anſwers that he ſpeaks like a Phaeacian, with oſtentation and vanity; beſides, it is natural for all people to form, not illaudibly, too favourable a judgment of their own country: and this agrees with the character of the Phaeacians in a more

None in the leap ſpring with ſo ſtrong a bound,
Or firmer, in the wreſtling, preſs the ground.

Thus ſpoke th' king; the attending peers obey:
In ſtate they move, Alcinous leads the way:
His golden lyre Demodocus unſtrung,
High on a column in the palace hung:
And guided by a herald's guardian cares,
Majeſtic to the liſts of fame repairs.

Now ſwarms the populace; a countleſs throng,
Youth and hoar age; and man drives man along:
The games begin; ambitious of the prize,
Acroneus, Thoon, and Eretmeus riſe;
The prize Ocyalus and Prymneus claim:
Anchialus and Ponteus, chiefs of fame:

particular manner, who called themſelves ἀ ſχιθεοὶ, and the favourites of the gods.

℣. 113. *The games*——] Euſtathius remarks, that Homer very judiciouſly paſſes over theſe games in a few lines, having in the Iliad exhauſted that ſubject; he there inlarged upon them, becauſe they were eſſential ornaments, it being neceſſary that Patroclus ſhould be honoured by his friend with the utmoſt ſolemnity. Here they are only introduced occaſionally, and therefore the poet haſtens to things more requiſite, and carries on the thread of his ſtory. But then it may be aſked why are they mentioned at all, and what do they contribute to the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes? It is evident that they are not without an happy effect; they give Ulyſſes an opportunity to ſignalize his character, to ingage the king and the peers in his favour, and this induces them to convey him to his own country, which is one of the moſt material incidents in the whole Odyſſey.

There Proreus, Nautes, Eratreus appear,
And fam'd Amphialus, Polyneus' heir:
Euryalus, like Mars terrific, roſe,
When clad in wrath he withers hoſts of foes:
Naubolides with grace unequall'd ſhone,
Or equall'd by Laodamas alone.
With theſe came forth Ambaſineus the ſtrong;
And three brave ſons, from great Alcinous ſprung,

℣. 119. *Euryalus, like Mars terrific, roſe.*] I was at a loſs for a reaſon why this figure of terror was introduced amongſt an unwarlike nation, upon an occaſion contrary to the general deſcription in the midſt of games and diverſions. Euſtathius takes notice, that the poet diſtinguiſhes the character of Euryalus, to force it upon our obſervation; he being the perſon who uſes Ulyſſes with roughneſs and inhumanity, and is the only peer that is deſcribed with a ſword, which he gives to Ulyſſes to repair his injury.

He further remarks, that almoſt all the names of the perſons who are mentioned as candidates in theſe games are borrowed from the ſea, Phaeacia being an iſland, and the people greatly addicted to navigation. I have taken the liberty to vary from the order obſerved by Homer in the catalogue of the names, to avoid the affinity of ſound in many of them, as Euryalus, Ocyalus, etc. and too many names being tedious, at leaſt in Engliſh poetry, I paſſed over the three ſons of Alcinous, Laodamas, Halius, and Clytoneus, and only mentioned them in general as the ſons of Alcinous.

I was ſurprized to ſee Dacier render

---------- υἱὸς Πολυνήυ Τεκτονίδαο,

The ſon of Polyneus the carpenter; it looks like burleſque: it ought to be rendered, the ſon of Polyneus Tectonides, a Patronymic, and it is ſo underſtood by all commentators.

Rang'd in a line the ready racers ſtand,
Start from the goal, and vaniſh o'er the ſtrand:
Swift as on wings of wind upborn they fly,
And drifts of riſing duſt involve the ſky:
Before the reſt, what ſpace the hinds allow
Between the mule and ox, from plow to plow;
Clytoneus ſprung: he wing'd the rapid way,
And bore th' unrival'd honours of the day.

℣. 129.——*What ſpace the hinds allow*
Between the mule and ox, from plow to plow.

This image drawn from rural affairs is now become obſolete, and gives us no diſtinct idea of the diſtance between Clytoneus and the other racers; but this obſcurity ariſes not from Homer's want of perſpicuity, but from the change which has happened in the method of tillage, and from a length of time which has effaced the diſtinct image which was originally ſtamped upon it, ſo that what was underſtood univerſally in the days of Homer is grown almoſt unintelligible to poſterity. Euſtathius only obſerves, that the teams of mules were placed at ſome diſtance from the teams of oxen; the mule being more ſwift in his labour than the ox, and conſequently more ground was allowed to the mule than the ox by the huſbandman. This gives us an idea that Clytoneus was the foremoſt of the racers, but how much is not to be diſcovered with any certainty. Ariſtarchus, as Didymus informs us, thus interprets Homer. 'As much 'as a yoke of mules ſet to work at the ſame time with 'a yoke of oxen, outgoes the oxen, (for mules are 'ſwifter than oxen,) ſo much Clytoneus outwent his 'competitors.' The ſame deſcription occurs in the tenth book of the Iliads, verſe 419, to which paſſage I refer the reader for a more large and different explication.

With fierce imbrace the brawny wreſtlers join;
The conqueſt, great Euryalus, is thine.
Amphialus ſprung forward with a bound,
Superior in the leap, a length of ground:
From Elatreus' ſtrong arm the diſcus flies,
And ſings with unmatch'd force along the ſkies.
And Laodame whirls high, with dreadful ſway,
The gloves of death, victorious in the fray.
While thus the peerage in the games contends,
In act to ſpeak, Laodamas aſcends:
O friends, he cries, the ſtranger ſeems well ſkill'd
To try th' illuſtrious labours of the field:
I deem him brave; then grant the brave man's claim,
Invite the hero to his ſhare of fame.
What nervous arms he boaſts! how firm his tread!
His limbs how turn'd! how broad his ſhoulders ſpread
By age unbroke!——but all-conſuming care
Deſtroys perhaps the ſtrength that time wou'd ſpare:

ỳ. 149. *By age unbroke!*] It is in the original literally, *he wants not youth;* this is ſpoken according to appearance only, for Ulyſſes muſt be ſuppoſed to be above forty, having ſpent twenty years in the wars of Troy, and in his return to his country. It is true Heſiod calls a perſon a youth, ἀϊζηὸν, who was forty years of age, but this muſt be underſtood with ſome allowance, unleſs we ſuppoſe that the life of man was longer in the times of Heſiod, than in theſe later ages; the contrary of which appears from many places in Homer, where the ſhortneſs of man's life is compared to the leaves of trees, *etc.* But what the poet here relates is very juſtifiable, for the youth which Ulyſſes ap-

Dire is the ocean, dread in all its forms!
Man muſt decay, when man contends with ſtorms.
Well haſt thou ſpoke, (Euryalus replies)
Thine is the gueſt, invite him thou to riſe.
Swift at the word advancing from the croud
He made obeyſance, and thus ſpoke aloud.
Vouchſafes the rev'rend ſtranger to diſplay
His manly worth, and ſhare the glorious day?
Father, ariſe! for thee thy port proclaims
Expert to conquer in the ſolemn games.
To fame ariſe! for what more fame can yield
Than the ſwift race, or conflict of the field?
Steal from corroding care one tranſient day,
To glory give the ſpace thou haſt to ſtay;
Short is the time, and low! ev'n now the gales
Call thee abroad, and ſtretch the ſwelling ſails.
To whom with ſighs Ulyſſes gave reply:
Ah why th' ill-ſuiting paſtime muſt I try?

pears to have, proceeds from Minerva; it is not a natural quality, but conferred by the immediate operation of a goddeſs.

This ſpeech concludes with an addreſs of great beauty; Laodamas invites Ulyſſes to act in the games, yet at the ſame time furniſhes him with a decent excuſe, to decline the invitation if it be againſt his inclinations; ſhould he refuſe, he imputes the refuſal to his calamities, not to any want of ſkill, or perſonal inability.

℣. 167. ——*Ulyſſes gave reply.*] Theſe are the firſt words ſpoken by Ulyſſes before the Phaeacians; and we cannot but be curious to know how he makes his addreſs to ingage a people, in whom he has no per-

To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;
Ill the gay ſports with troubled hearts agree:
Sad from my natal hour my days have ran,
A much-afflicted, much-induring man!
Who ſuppliant to the king and peers, implores
A ſpeedy voyage to his native ſhores.
Wide wanders, Laodame, thy erring tongue,
The ſports of glory to the brave belong,
(Retorts Euryalus:) he boaſts no claim
Among the great, unlike the ſons of Fame.
A wand'ring merchant he frequents the main,
Some mean ſea-farer in purſuit of gain;
Studious of freight, in naval trade well ſkill'd,
But dreads th' athletic labours of the field.
Incens'd Ulyſſes with a frown replies,
O forward to proclaim thy ſoul unwiſe!
With partial hands the gods their gifts diſpenſe;
Some greatly think, ſome ſpeak with manly ſenſe;
Here heav'n an elegance of form denies,
But wiſdom the defect of form ſupplies:

ſonal intereſt, in his favour. His ſpeech is excellently adapted to this purpoſe: he repreſents himſelf as a ſuppliant to the king and all the aſſembly; and all ſuppliants being eſteemed ſacred, he at once makes it a duty in all the aſſembly to protect him; if they refuſe to aſſiſt him, they become guilty of no leſs a crime, than a violation of the laws of hoſpitality.

This

This man with energy of thought controuls,
And ſteals with modeſt violence our ſouls,
He ſpeaks reſerv'dly, but he ſpeaks with force,
Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worſe;
In public more than mortal he appears,
And as he moves the gazing croud reveres.

℣. 190. *And ſteals with modeſt violence our ſouls,*
He ſpeaks reſerv'dly, but he ſpeaks with force.
There is a difficulty in the Greek expreſſion, ἀσφαλέως ἀγορεύει, αἰδοῖ μειλιχίῃ; that is, 'he ſpeaks ſe-'curely with a winning modeſty.' Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus interprets it, in his Examination of Oratory, to ſignify that the orator argues *per conceſſa*, and ſo proceeds with certainty, or ἀσφαλέως; without danger of refutation. The word properly ſignifies without ſtumbling, ἀπροσκόπως, as in the proverb cited by Euſtathius, φορητότερον ποσὶν ἢπερ γλώττῃ προσκόπτειν; that is, 'it is better to ſtumble with the feet than with 'the tongue.' The words are conciſe, but of a very extenſive comprehenſion, and take in every thing, both in ſentiments and diction, that enters into the character of a complete orator. Dacier concurs in the ſame interpretation; *He ſpeaks reſervedly, or with caution; he hazards nothing that he would afterwards wiſh* (repentir) *to alter. And all his words are full of ſweetneſs and modeſty.* Theſe two lines are found almoſt literally in Heſiod's Theogony, ver. 92.

Ἐρχομένου δ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ, θεὸν ὡς ἱλάσκονται
Αἰδοῖ μειλιχίῃ. Μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισιν.

Whether Homer borrowed theſe verſes from Heſiod, or Heſiod from Homer, is not evident. Tully, in his book *de Senectute* is of opinion, that Homer preceded Heſiod many ages, and conſequently in his judgment the verſes are Homer's. I queſtion not but he had this very paſ-

While others, beauteous as th' aetherial kind,
The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.
In outward ſhow heav'n gives thee to excell,
But heav'n denies the praiſe of thinking well.
Ill bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,
And, youth, my gen'rous ſoul reſents the wrong;
Skill'd in heroic exerciſe, I claim
A poſt of honour with the ſons of Fame;

ſage in view in his third book of his Orator. *Quem ſtupefacti dicentem intuentur, quem Deum, ut ita dicam, inter homines putant;* which is almoſt a tranſlation of Homer.

℣. 201. *Skill'd in heroic exerciſe, I claim*
A poſt of honour with the ſons of Fame.]

It may be thought that Ulyſſes, both here and in his ſubſequent ſpeech, is too oſtentatious, and that he dwells more than modeſty allows upon his own accompliſhments: but ſelf-praiſe is ſometimes no fault. Plutarch has wrote a diſſertation, how a man may praiſe himſelf without envy: what Ulyſſes here ſpeaks is not a boaſt but a juſtification. Perſons in diſtreſs, ſays Plutarch, may ſpeak of themſelves with dignity: it ſhews a greatneſs of ſoul, and that they bear up againſt the ſtorms of fortune with bravery: they have too much courage to fly to pity and commiſeration, which betray deſpair and an hopeleſs condition: ſuch a man ſtruggling with ill fortune ſhews himſelf a champion, and if by a bravery of ſpeech he transforms himſelf from miſerable and abject, into bold and noble, he is not to be cenſured as vain or obſtinate, but great and invincible.

This is a full juſtification of Ulyſſes, he oppoſes virtue to calumny; aud what Horace applies to himſelf we apply to this hero.

Quaeſitam meritis, ſume ſuperbiam.

Such was my boaſt, while vigour crown'd my days,
Now care ſurrounds me, and my force decays;
Inur'd a melancholy part to bear,
In ſcenes of death, by tempeſt and by war.
Yet thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave
To prove the hero———Slander ſtings the brave.

Then ſtriding forward with a furious bound,
He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground:
By far more pond'rous and more huge by far,
Than what Phaeacia's ſons diſcharg'd in air.
Fierce from his arm th' enormous load he flings;
Sonorous thro' the ſhaded air it ſings;
Couch'd to the earth, tempeſtuous as it flies,
The croud gaze upward while it cleaves the ſkies.
Beyond all marks, with many a giddy round
Down ruſhing, it up-turns a hill of ground.

That inſtant Pallas, burſting from a cloud,
Fix'd a diſtinguiſh'd mark, and cry'd aloud.

Beſides, it was neceſſary to ſhew himſelf a perſon of figure and diſtinction, to recommend his condition to the Phaeacians: he was a ſtranger to the whole nation, and he therefore takes a probable method to engage their aſſiſtance by acquainting them with his worth; he deſcribes himſelf as unfortunate, but yet as a hero in adverſity.

℣. 219. *That inſtant Pallas, burſting from a cloud.*] There is not a paſſage in the whole Odyſſey, where a deity is introduced with leſs apparent neceſſity: the goddeſs of wiſdom is brought down from heaven to act what might have been done as well by any of the ſpectators, namely to proclaim what was ſelf-evident, the

Ev'n he who ſightleſs wants his viſual ray,
May by his touch alone award the day:
Thy ſignal throw tranſcends the utmoſt bound
Of ev'ry champion, by a length of ground:
Securely bid the ſtrongeſt of the train
Ariſe to throw: the ſtrongeſt throws in vain.
She ſpoke; and momentary mounts the ſky:
The friendly voice Ulyſſes hears with joy;
Then thus aloud, (elate with decent pride)
Riſe ye Phaeacians, try your force, he cry'd;

victory of Ulyſſes. When a deity appears, our expectations are awakened for the introduction of ſomething important, but what action of importance ſucceeds? It is true, her appearance incourages Ulyſſes, and immediately upon it he challenges the whole Phaeacian aſſembly. But he was already victor, and no further action is performed. If indeed ſhe had appeared openly in favour of Ulyſſes, this would have been greatly advantageous to him, and the Phaeacians muſt have highly reverenced a perſon who was ſo remarkably honoured by a goddeſs: but it is not evident that the Phaeacians, or even Ulyſſes knew the deity, but took her for a man as ſhe appeared to be; and Ulyſſes himſelf immediately rejoices that he had found a friend in the aſſembly. If this be true, the deſcent of Pallas will prove very unneceſſary; for if ſhe was eſteemed to be merely human, ſhe acts nothing in the character of a deity, and performs no more than might have been performed by a man, and conſequently gave no greater courage to Ulyſſes than a friend actually gave, for ſuch only he believed her to be. Euſtathius appears to be of the ſame opinion, for he ſays the place is to be underſtood allegorically, and what is thus ſpoken by a Phaeacian with wiſdom, is by the poet applied to the goddeſs of it.

If with this throw the ſtrongeſt caſter vye,
Still, further ſtill, I bid the diſcus fly.
Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,
Or you, the ſwifteſt racers of the field!
Stand forth, ye wreſtlers, who theſe paſtimes grace!
I wield the gauntlet, and I run the race.
In ſuch heroic games I yield to none,
Or yield to brave Laodamas alone:
Shall I with brave Laodamas contend?
A friend is ſacred, and I ſtile him friend.
Ungen'rous were the man, and baſe of heart,
Who takes the kind, and pays th' ungrateful part:
Chiefly the man, in foreign realms confin'd,
Baſe to his friend, to his own intereſt blind:

℣. 239. *Shall I with brave Laodamas contend?*
A friend is ſacred, and I ſtile him friend.

Nothing can be more artful than this addreſs of Ulyſſes; he finds a way, in the middle of a bold challenge, to ſecure himſelf of a powerful advocate, by paying an ingenious and laudable deference to his friend. But it may be aſked if decency be obſerved, and ought Ulyſſes to challenge the father Alcinous (for he ſpeaks univerſally) and yet except his ſon Laodamas, eſpecially when Alcinous was more properly his friend than Laodamas? and why ſhould he be excepted rather than the other brothers? Spondanus anſwers, that the two brothers are included in the perſon of Laodamas, they all have the ſame relation to Ulyſſes, as being equally a ſuppliant to them all, and conſequently claim the ſame exemption from this challenge as Laodamas; and Alcinous is not concerned it: he is the judge and arbitrator of the games, not a candidate, like Achilles in the Iliad. But why is Laodamas named in particular? He was the el-

All, all your heroes I this day defy,
Give me a man that we our might may try!
Expert in ev'ry art, I boaſt the ſkill;
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
Should a whole hoſt at once diſcharge the bow,
My well-aim'd ſhaft with death prevents the foe:
Alone ſuperior in the field of Troy,
Great Philoctetes taught the ſhaft to fly.

der brother, and Ulyſſes might therefore be conſigned to his care in particular, by the right due to his ſeniority; beſides, he might be the nobleſt perſonage, having conquered his antagoniſt at the gauntlet, which was the moſt dangerous, and conſequently the moſt honourable exerciſe, and therefore Ulyſſes might pay him peculiar honours. Spondanus.

℣. 249. *Should a whole hoſt at once diſcharge the bow,*
My well-aim'd ſhaft with death prevents the foe.

There is an ambiguity in the original, and it may imply either, that if Ulyſſes and his friends were at the ſame time to aim their arrows againſt an enemy, his arrow would fly with more certainty and expedition than that of his companions: or that if his enemies had bent all their bows at once againſt him, yet his ſhaft would reach his adverſary before they could diſcharge their arrows. Euſtathius follows the former, Dacier the latter interpretation. And certainly the latter argues the greater intrepidity and preſence of mind: it ſhews Ulyſſes in the extremity of danger capable of acting with calmneſs and ſerenity, and ſhooting with the ſame certainty and ſteadineſs, though multitudes of enemies indanger his life. I have followed this explication, as it is nobler, and ſhews Ulyſſes to be a conſummate hero.

From all the ſons of earth unrival'd praiſe
I juſtly claim; but yield to better days,
To thoſe fam'd days when great Alcides roſe,
And Eurytus, who bad the gods be foes:
(Vain Eurytus, whoſe art became his crime,
Swept from the earth he periſh'd in his prime;
Sudden th' irremeable way he trod,
Who boldly durſt defy the Bowyer God.)
In fighting fields as far the ſpear I throw,
As flies an arrow from the well-drawn bow.
Sole in the race the conteſt I decline,
Stiff are my weary joints, and I reſign

℣. 257. *Vain Eurytus.*——] This Eurytus was king of OEchalia, famous for his ſkill in archery; he propoſed his daughter Iole in marriage to any perſon that could conquer him at the exerciſe of the bow. Later writers differ from Homer, as Euſtathius obſerves, concerning Eurytus. They write that Hercules overcame him, and he denying his daughter, was ſlain, and his daughter made captive by Hercules: whereas Homer writes that he was killed by Apollo, that is, died a ſudden death, according to the import of that expreſſion. The ancients differ much about OEchalia; ſome place it in Eubaea, and ſome in Meſſenia, of which opinion is Pauſanias. But Homer in the Iliad places it in Theſſaly: for he mentions with it Tricca and Ithome, which as Dacier obſerves were cities of Theſſaly.

℣. 263. *Sole in the race the conteſt I decline.*] This is directly contrary to his challenge in the beginning of the ſpeech, where he mentions the race amongſt the other games. How then is this difference to be reconciled? Very naturally. Ulyſſes ſpeaks with a generous warmth, and is tranſported with anger in the beginning

By ſtorms and hunger worn: age well may fail,
When ſtorms and hunger both at once aſſail.

Abaſh'd, the numbers hear the god-like man,
'Till great Alcinous mildly thus began.

of his oration: here the heat of it is cooled, and conſequently reaſon takes place, and he has time to reflect, that a man ſo diſabled by calamities is not an equal match for a younger and leſs fatigued antagoniſt. This is an exact repreſentation of human nature; when our paſſions remit, the vehemence of our ſpeech remits; at firſt he ſpeaks like a man in anger, here like the wiſe Ulyſſes.

It is obſervable that Ulyſſes all along maintains a decency and reverence towards the gods, even while his anger ſeems to be maſter over his reaſon; he gives Eurytus as an example of the juſt vengeance of heaven, and ſhews himſelf in a very oppoſite light: he is ſo far from contending with the gods, that he allows himſelf to be inferior to ſome other heroes: an inſtance of modeſty.

ver. 265. ——— *Age well may fail,*
When ſtorms and hunger ———]

This paſſage appears to me to refer to the late ſtorms and ſhipwreck, and the long abſtinence Ulyſſes ſuffered in ſailing from Calypſo to the Phaeacian iſland; for when Nauſicaa found him, he was almoſt dead with hunger, as appears from the ſixth of the Odyſſey. Dacier is of a different opinion, and thinks it relates to his abſtinence and ſhipwreck upon his leaving Circe, before he came to Calypſo. This ſeems very improbable; for Ulyſſes had lived ſeven years with that goddeſs in great affluence, and conſequently muſt be ſuppoſed to have recruited his loſs of ſtrength in ſo long a time, and with the particular care of a goddeſs: beſides, Alcinous was acquainted with his late ſhipwreck, and his daughter Nauſicaa was in ſome degree witneſs to it: is it not therefore more probable that he ſhould refer to this lat-

Well haſt thou ſpoke, and well thy gen'rous tongue
With decent pride refutes a public wrong:
Warm are thy words, but warm without offence;
Fear only fools, ſecure in men of ſenſe:
Thy worth is known. Then hear our country's claim,
And bear to heroes our heroic fame;
In diſtant realms our glorious deeds diſplay,
Repeat them frequent in the genial day;

ter incident, than ſpeak of a calamity that happened ſeven years paſt, to which they were intirely ſtrangers?

Dacier likewiſe aſſerts that Euſtathius is guilty of a miſtake, in making κομιδὴ or *proviſion*, to ſignify the ſhip itſelf; but in reality he makes an evident diſtinction: Οὐ γὰρ διὰ τὸ μὴ κομιδὴν ἐν βρώμασιν ἔχειν ἐδαμάσθη Ὀδυσσεὺς τοῖς κύμασιν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐθραύσθη κύμασιν ἡ κομιδὴν ἔχουσα ναῦς; 'Ulyſſes ſuffered not in the ſtorm becauſe he had no proviſions to eat, but becauſe the ſhip that bore the proviſions was broken by the ſtorm;' which ſhews a wide difference between the veſſel and the proviſions: ſo that the expreſſion really implies that the veſſel was broken; but Euſtathius is far from affirming that κομιδὴ and ναῦς (except in ſuch an improper ſenſe) have the ſame ſignification.

℣. 275. *In diſtant realms our glorious deeds diſplay.*] From this extravagant preface, it might be imagined that Alcinous was king of a nation of heroes: whereas when he comes to explain the excellence of his ſubjects, he has ſcarce any thing to boaſt of that is manly; they ſpend an idle life in ſinging, dancing, and feaſting. Thus the poet all along writes conſiſtently; we may know the Phaeacians by their character, which is always to be voluptuous, or as Horace expreſſes it,

When bleſt with eaſe thy woes and wand'rings end,
Teach them thy conſort, bid thy ſons attend;
How lov'd of Jove he crown'd our ſires with praiſe,
How we their offspring dignify our race.
Let other realms the deathful gauntlet wield,
Or boaſt the glories of th' athletic field;
We in the courſe unrival'd ſpeed diſplay,
Or thro' caerulean billows plow the way,
To dreſs, to dance, to ſing our ſole delight,
The feaſt or bath by day, and love by night:
Riſe then ye ſkill'd in meaſures; let him bear
Your fame to men that breathe a diſtant air;
And faithful ſay, to you the pow'rs belong
To race, to ſail, to dance, to chaunt the ſong.
But, herald, to the palace ſwift repair,
And the ſoft lyre to grace our paſtimes bear.
Swift at the word, obedient to the king
The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.
Up roſe nine ſeniors, choſen to ſurvey
The future games, the judges of the day:
With inſtant care they mark a ſpacious round,
And level for the dance th' alloted ground;

——*Alcinoique*
In cute curanda plus aequo operata juventus.

And Euſtathius rightly obſerves that the poet does not teach that we ought to live ſuch lives, but only relates hiſtorically what lives were led by the Phaeacians; he deſcribes them as a contemptible people, and conſequently propoſes them as objects of our ſcorn, not imitation.

The herald bears the lyre: intent to play,
The bard advancing meditates the lay,
Skill'd in the dance, till youths, a blooming band,
Graceful before the heav'nly minſtrel ſtand:
Light-bounding from the earth, at once they riſe,
Their feet half-viewleſs quiver in the ſkies:

℣. 301. *Skill'd in the dance——*] I beg leave to tranſlate Dacier's annotation upon this paſſage, and to offer a remark upon it. This deſcription, ſays that lady, is remarkable, not becauſe the dancers moved to the ſound of the harp and the ſong; for in this there is nothing extraordinary; but in that they danced, if I may ſo expreſs it, an hiſtory; that is, by their geſtures and movements they expreſſed what the muſic of the harp and voice deſcribed, and the dance was a repreſentation of what was the ſubject of the poet's ſong. Homer only ſays they danced divinely, according to the obvious meaning of the words. I fancy madam Dacier would have forborn her obſervation, if ſhe had reflected upon the nature of the ſong to which the Phaeacians danced: it was an intrigue between Mars and Venus; and they being taken in ſome very odd poſtures, ſhe muſt allow that theſe dancers repreſented ſome very old geſtures, (or movements as ſhe expreſſes it) if they were now dancing an hiſtory, that is, acting in their motions what was the ſubject of the ſong. But I ſubmit to the judgment of the ladies, and ſhall only add, that this is an inſtance how a critical eye can ſee ſome things in an author, that were never intended by him; though to do her juſtice, ſhe borrowed the general remark from Euſtathius.

The words μαρμαρυγὰς θηεῖτο ποδῶν are very expreſſive, they repreſent the quick glancings of their feet in the dance, *Motus pedum coruſcans;* or

The glancing ſplendors as their ſandals play.

Ulyſſes gaz'd, aſtoniſh'd to ſurvey
The glancing ſplendors as their ſandals play.
Mean-time the bard alternate to the ſtrings
The loves of Mars and Cytherea ſings:

℣. 307.——*The bard alternate to the ſtrings*
The loves of Mars and Cytherea ſings.

The reader may be pleaſed to look back to the beginning of the book for a general vindication of this ſtory. Scaliger in his Poetics prefers the ſong of Iopas in Virgil, to this of Demodocus in Homer; *Demodocus Deorrum canit ſoeditates, noſter Iopas res rege dignas.* Monſieur Dacier in his annotations upon Ariſtotle's Poetics refutes the objection. The ſong of Demodocus, ſays he, is as well adapted to the inclinations and reliſh of the Phaeacians, as the ſong of Iopas is to queen Dido. It may indeed be queſtioned whether the ſubject of Virgil's ſong be well choſen, and whether the deepeſt points of philoſophy were intirely proper to be ſung to a queen and her female attendants.

The various labours of the wand'ring moon,
And whence proceed th' eclipſes of the ſun,
Th' original of men and beaſts, and whence
The rains ariſe, and fires their warmth diſpence, etc.

DRYDEN.

Nor is Virgil more reſerved than Homer: in the fourth Georgic he introduces a nymph, who in the court of the goddeſs Cyrene with her nymphs about her, ſings this very ſong of Demodocus.

To theſe Clymene the ſweet theft declares
Of Mars; and Vulcan's unavailing cares;
And all the rapes of gods, and every love
From ancient Chaos down to youthful Jove.

DRYDEN.

How

How the ſtern god enamour'd with her charms
Claſp'd the gay panting goddeſs in his arms,
By bribes ſeduc'd: and how the ſun, whoſe eye
Views the broad heav'ns, diſclos'd the lawleſs joy.
Stung to the ſoul, indignant thro' the ſkies
To his black forge vindictive Vulcan flies;
Arriv'd, his ſinewy arms inceſſant place
Th' eternal anvil on the maſſy baſe.

So that if either of the poets are to be blamed, it is certainly Virgil: but neither of them, adds that critic, are culpable: Virgil underſtood what a chaſte queen ought to hear before ſtrangers, and what women might ſay when alone among themſelves: thus to the queen he ſings a philoſophical ſong, the intrigues of Mars and Venus amongſt nymphs when they were alone.

Plutarch vindicates this ſtory of Homer: there is a way of teaching by mute actions, and thoſe very fables that have given moſt offence, furniſh us with uſeful contemplations: thus in the ſtory of Mars and Venus, ſome have by an unneceſſary violence endeavoured to reduce it into allegory: when Venus is in conjunction with the ſtar called Mars, they have an adulterous influence, but time, or the ſun, reveals it. But the poet himſelf far better explains the meaning of his fable, for he teaches that light muſic and wanton ſongs debauch the manners, and incline men to an unmanly way of living in luxury and wantonneſs.

In ſhort, Virgil mentions this ſtory, Ovid tranſlates it, Plutarch commends it, and Scaliger cenſures it. I will add the judgment of a late writer, Monſieur Boileau, concerning Scaliger, in his notes upon Longinus. 'That proud ſcholar, ſays he, intending to erect altars 'to Virgil, as he expreſſes it, ſpeaks of Homer too 'prophanely; but it is a book which he calls in prat 'hypercritical, to ſhew that he tranſgreſſed the bounds

A wond'rous net he labours, to betray
The wanton lovers, as entwin'd they lay,
Indiſſolubly ſtrong! then inſtant bears
To his immortal dome the finiſh'd ſnares.
Above, below, around, with art diſpread,
The ſure incloſure folds the genial bed;
Whoſe texture ev'n the ſearch of gods deceives,
Thin as the filmy threads the ſpider weaves.
Then as withdrawing from the ſtarry bow'rs,
He feigns a journey to the Lemnian ſhores:
His fav'rite iſle! Obſervant Mars deſcries
His wiſh'd receſs, and to the goddeſs flies;
He glows, he burns: the fair-hair'd queen of love
Deſcends ſmooth-gliding from the courts of Jove,
Gay blooming in full charms: her hand he preſt
With eager joy, and with a ſigh addreſt.

Come, my belov'd! and taſte the ſoft delights:
Come, to repoſe the genial bed invites:
Thy abſent ſpouſe neglectful of thy charms
Prefers his barb'rous Sintians to thy arms!

' of true criticiſm: that piece was a diſhonour to Scali-
' ger, and he fell into ſuch groſs errors, that he drew
' upon him the ridicule of all men of letters, and even
' of his own ſon.'

Ver. 336. *Prefers his barb'rous Sintians to thy arms.*] The Sintians were the inhabitants of Lemnos, by origin Thracians: Homer calls them barbarous of ſpeech, becauſe their language was a corruption of the Greek, Aſiatic, and Thracian. But there is a concealed raillery in the expreſſion, and Mars ridicules the ill taſte of Vulcan for leaving ſo beautiful a goddeſs to viſit his rude

Then, nothing loth, th' enamour'd fair he led,
And ſunk tranſported on the conſcious bed.
Down ruſh'd the toils, inwrapping as they lay
The careleſs lovers in their wanton play:
In vain they ſtrive, th' intangling ſnares deny
(Inextricably firm) the pow'r to fly:
Warn'd by the god who ſheds the golden day,
Stern Vulcan homeward treads the ſtarry way:
Arriv'd, he ſees, he grieves, with rage he burns;
Full horribly he roars, his voice all heav'n returns.
O Jove, he cry'd, oh all ye Pow'rs above,
See the lewd dalliance of the queen of love!

and barbarous Sintians. The poet calls Lemnos the favourite iſle of Vulcan; this alludes to the ſubterraneous fires frequent in that iſland, and he is feigned to have his forge there, as the god of fire. This is likewiſe the reaſon why he is ſaid to fall into the iſland Lemnos when Jupiter threw him from heaven. Dacier.

ϒ. 348. *See the lewd dalliance of the queen of love.*] The original ſeems to be corrupted; were it to be tranſlated according to the preſent editions, it muſt be, *See the ridiculous deeds of Venus.* I conceive, that few husbands who ſhould take their ſpouſes in ſuch circumſtances would have any great appetite to laugh; neither is ſuch an interpretation conſonant to the words immediately following ὐκ ἐπιειχ]ὰ. It is therefore very probable that the verſe was originally,

Δεῦθ' ἵνα ἔργ' ἀγελαστὰ καὶ ὐκ ἐπιειχὰ ἴδησθε.

Come ye gods, behold the ſad and unſufferable deeds of Venus; and this agrees with the tenor of Vulcan's behaviour in this comedy, who has not the leaſt diſpoſition to be merry with his brother deities.

Me, aukward me ſhe ſcorns, and yields her charms
To that fair letcher, the ſtrong god of arms.
If I am lame, that ſtain my natal hour
By fate impos'd; ſuch me my parent bore:
Why was I born? ſee how the wanton lies!
O ſight tormenting to an huſband's eyes!
But yet I truſt, this once ev'n Mars would fly
His fair one's arms——he thinks her, once, too nigh.
But there remain, ye guilty, in my pow'r,
'Till Jove refunds his ſhameleſs daughter's dow'r.

℣. 358. *'Till Jove refund his ſhameleſs daughter's dow'r.*] I doubt not but this was the uſage of antiquity: it has been obſerved that the bridegroom made preſents to the father of the bride, which were called ἔνδα; and if ſhe was afterwards falſe to his bed, this dower was reſtored by the father to the huſband. Beſides this reſtitution, there ſeems a pecuniary mulct to have been paid, as appears evident from what follows.

——The god of arms,
Muſt pay the penalty for lawleſs charms.

Homer in this, as in many other places, ſeems to allude to the laws of Athens, where death was the puniſhment of adultery. Pauſanias relates, that Draco the Athenian lawgiver granted impunity to any perſon that took revenge upon an adulterer. Such alſo was the inſtitution of Solon; 'If any one ſeize an adulterer, let him uſe him as he pleaſes, ἐὰν τις μοιχὸν λάβῃ, ὅτι ἂν βούληται χρῆσθαι. And thus Eratoſthenes anſwered a perſon who begged his life after he had injured his bed, οὐκ ἐγώ σε ἀποκτενῶ, ἀλλ' ὁ τῆς πόλεως νόμος. 'It is not I who ſlay thee, but the law of thy 'country.' But ſtill it was in the power of the injured perſon to take a pecuniary mulct by way of atonement:

Too dear I priz'd a fair enchanting face:
Beauty unchaſte is beauty in diſgrace.

Mean-while the gods the dome of Vulcan throng,
Apollo comes, and Neptune comes along,
With theſe gay Hermes trod the ſtarry plain;
But modeſty with-held the goddeſs-train.
All heav'n beholds, impriſon'd as they lye,
And unextinguiſh'd laughter ſhakes the ſky.

Then mutual, thus they ſpoke: Behold on wrong
Swift vengeance waits; and art ſubdues the ſtrong!
Dwells there a god on all th' Olympian brow
More ſwift than Mars, and more than Vulcan ſlow?

for thus the ſame Eratoſthenes ſpeaks in Lyſias, ἠνιᾶτο καὶ ἱκέτευε μὴ αὐτὸν κτεῖναι, ἀλλ' ἀργύριον πράξασθαι, 'he entreated me not to take his 'life, but exact a ſum of money.' Nay, ſuch penalties were allowed by way of commutation for greater crimes than adultery, as in the caſe of murder: Iliad 9.

——If a brother bleed,
On juſt atonement, we remit the deed:
A ſire the ſlaughter of his ſon forgives;
The price of blood diſcharg'd, the murd'rer lives.

ver. 367. *——Behold on wrong*
Swift vengeance waits——]

Plutarch in his diſſertation upon reading the poets, quotes this as an inſtance of Homer's judgment, in cloſing a ludicrous ſcene with decency and inſtruction. He artfully inſerts a ſentence by which he diſcovers his own judgment, and lets the reader into the moral of his fables; by this conduct he makes even the repreſentation of evil actions uſeful, by ſhewing the ſhame and detriment they draw upon thoſe who are guilty of them.

Yet Vulcan conquers, and the god of arms
Muſt pay the penalty for lawleſs charms.

Thus ſerious they: but he who gildes the ſkies,
The gay Apollo thus to Hermes cries.
Wou'dſt thou enchained like Mars, oh Hermes, lie,
And bear the ſhame like Mars, to ſhare the joy?

O envy'd ſhame! (the ſmiling youth rejoin'd,)
Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind;
Gaze all ye gods, and ev'ry goddeſs gaze,
Yet eager would I bleſs the ſweet diſgrace.

Loud laugh the reſt, ev'n Neptune laughs aloud,
Yet ſues importunate to looſe the god:
And free, he cries, oh Vulcan! free from ſhame
Thy captives; I enſure the penal claim.

Will Neptune (Vulcan then) the faithleſs truſt?
He ſuffers who gives ſurety for th' unjuſt:

℣. 382. *Neptune ſues to looſe the god.*] It may be aſked why Neptune in particular intereſts himſelf in the deliverance of Mars, rather than the other gods? Dacier confeſſes ſhe can find no reaſon for it; but Euſtathius is of opinion, that Homer aſcribes it to that god out of decency, and deference to his ſuperior majeſty and eminence amongſt the other deities: it is ſuitable to the character of that moſt ancient, and conſequently honourable god, to interrupt ſuch an indecent ſcene of mirth, which is not ſo becoming his perſonage, as thoſe more youthful deities Apollo and Mercury. Beſides, it agrees well with Neptune's gravity to be the firſt who is mindful of friendſhip; ſo that what is here ſaid of Neptune is not accidental, but ſpoken judiciouſly by the poet in honour of that deity.

℣. 386. *He ſuffers who gives ſurety for th' unjuſt.*]

But ſay, if that lewd ſcandal of the ſky
To liberty reſtor'd, perfidious fly,
Say wilt thou bear the mulct? He inſtant cries,
The mulct I bear, if Mars perfidious flies.
To whom appeas'd: no more I urge delay;
When Neptune ſues, my part is to obey.
Then to the ſnares his force the god applies;
They burſt; and Mars to Thrace indignant flies:

This verſe is very obſcure, and made ſtill more obſcure by the explanations of critics. Some think it implies, that it is wicked to be ſurety for a wicked perſon; and therefore Neptune ſhould not give his promiſe for Mars thus taken in adultery. Some take it generally; ſuretyſhip is detrimental, and it is the lot of unhappy men to be ſureties; the words then are to be conſtrued in the following order, δειλάι τοι ἔγγυαι, καὶ δειλῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐγγυάσθαι. *Sponſiones ſunt infelices, et hominum eſt infelicium ſponſiones dare.* Others underſtand it very differently, *viz.* to imply that the ſureties of men of inferior condition ſhould be to men of inferior condition; then the ſentence will bear this import: if Mars, ſays Vulcan, refuſes to diſcharge the penalty, how ſhall I compel Neptune to pay it, who is ſo greatly my ſuperior? and therefore adds by way of ſentence, that the ſponſor ought to be of the ſame ſtation with the perſon to whom he becomes ſurety; or in Latin *ſimplicium hominum ſimplices eſſe debent ſponſores.* I have followed Plutarch, who in his banquet of the ſeven wiſe men, explains it to ſignify that it is dangerous to be ſurety for a wicked perſon, according to the ancient ſentence, ἔγγυα παρὰ δ' ἄτα. *Loſs follows ſuretyſhip.* Agreeably to the opinion of a much wiſer perſon, *He that is ſurety for a ſtranger ſhall ſmart for it; and he that hateth ſuretyſhip is ſure,* Prov. xi. 15.

To the ſoft Cyprian ſhores the goddeſs moves,
To viſit Paphos and her blooming groves,
Where to the Pow'r an hundred altars riſe,
And breathing odours ſcent the balmy ſkies,
Conceal'd ſhe bathes in conſecrated bow'rs,
The Graces unguents ſhed, ambroſial ſhow'rs,
Unguents that charm the gods! ſhe laſt aſſumes
Her wond'rous robes; and full the goddeſs blooms.

Thus ſung the bard: Ulyſſes hears with joy,
And loud applauſes rend the vaulted ſky.

Then to the ſports his ſons the king commands,
Each blooming youth before the monarch ſtands:
In dance unmatch'd! a wond'rous ball is brought,
(The work of Polybus, divinely wrought)
This youth with ſtrength enormous bids it fly,
And bending backward whirls it to the sky;

ỳ. 394. ——— *Mars to Thrace indignant flies:*
To the ſoft Cyprian ſhores the goddeſs moves.] There is a reaſon for this particularity: the Thracians were a warlike people: the poet therefore ſends the god of war thither: and the people of Cyprus being effeminate, and addicted to love and pleaſures, he feigns the receſs of the *goddeſs of love* to have been in that iſland. It is further obſervable, that he barely mentions the retreat of Mars, but dwells more largely upon the ſtory of Venus. The reaſon is, the Phaeacians had no delight in the god of war, but the ſoft deſcription of Venus better ſuited with their inclinations. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 410. *And bending backward whirls it to the ſky.*] This is a literal tranſlation of ἰδνωθεὶς ὀπίσω; and it gives us a lively image of a perſon in the act of throwing towards the ſkies. Euſtathius is moſt learnedly tri-

His brother ſpringing with an active bound,
At diſtance intercepts it from the ground:
The ball diſmiſs'd, in dance they ſkim the ſtrand,
Turn and return, and ſcarce imprint the ſand.
Th' aſſembly gazes with aſtoniſh'd eyes,
And ſends in ſhouts applauſes to the ſkies.

Then thus Ulyſſes; happy king, whoſe name
The brighteſt ſhines in all the rolls of fame:
In ſubjects happy! with ſurprize I gaze;
Thy praiſe was juſt; their ſkill tranſcends thy praiſe.

Pleas'd with his people's fame the monarch hears,
And thus benevolent accoſts the peers.

ſling about this exerciſe of the ball, which was called οὐρανία, or *aerial;* it was a kind of dance, and while they ſprung from the ground to catch the ball, they played with their feet in the air after the manner of dancers. He reckons up ſeveral other exerciſes at the ball, ἀπόῤῥαξις, φαινίνδα, ἐπίσκυρος, and θερμαύστρις; and explains them all largely. Homer ſeems to oppoſe this aerial dance to the common one, ποτὶ χθονὶ, or *on the ground*, which appears to be added to make an evident diſtinction between the ſports; otherwiſe it is unneceſſary; and to dance upon the ground is implied in ὠρχείσθην, for how ſhould a dance be performed but upon the ground?

℣. 420. *Thy praiſe was juſt*——] The original ſays, You promiſed that your ſubjects were excellent dancers, ἀπειλήσας; that is, threatened: *Minans* is uſed in the ſame ſenſe by the Latins, as Dacier obſerves; thus Horace,

Multa et praeclara minantem.

Euſtathius remarks, that the addreſs of Ulyſſes is very artful, he calls it a ſeaſonable flattery: in reality to ex-

Since wiſdom's ſacred guidance he purſues,
Give to the ſtranger-gueſt a ſtranger's dues:
Twelve princes in our realm dominion ſhare,
O'er whom ſupreme, imperial pow'r I bear:
Bring gold, a pledge of love, a talent bring,
A veſt, a robe, and imitate your king:
Be ſwift to give; that he this night may ſhare
The ſocial feaſt of joy, with joy ſincere.
And thou, Euryalus, redeem thy wrong:
A gen'rous heart repairs a ſland'rous tongue.
Th' aſſenting peers, obedient to the king,
In haſte their heralds ſend the gifts to bring.
Then thus Euryalus: O prince, whoſe ſway
Rules this bleſt realm, repentant I obey!
Be his this ſword, whoſe blade of braſs diſplays
A ruddy gleam; whoſe hilt, a ſilver blaze;
Whoſe ivory ſheath, inwrought with curious pride,
Adds graceful terror to the wearer's ſide.
He ſaid, and to his hand the ſword conſign'd;
And if, he cry'd, my words affect thy mind,
Far from thy mind thoſe words, ye whirlwinds bear,
And ſcatter them, ye ſtorms, in empty air!
Crown, oh ye heav'ns, with joy his peaceful hours,
And grant him to his ſpouſe and native ſhores!

cel in dancing, is but to excel in trifles, but in the opinion of Alcinous it was a moſt noble qualification: Ulyſſes therefore pleaſes his vanity by adapting his praiſe to his notions; and that which would have been an affront in ſome nations, is eſteemed as the higheſt compliment by Alcinous.

And bleſt be thou, my friend, Ulyſſes cries,
Crown him with ev'ry joy, ye fav'ring ſkies;
To thy calm hours continu'd peace afford,
And never, never may'ſt thou want this ſword!
He ſaid, and o'er his ſhoulder flung the blade.
Now o'er the earth aſcends the evening ſhade:
The precious gifts th' illuſtrious heralds bear,
And to the court th' embody'd peers repair.
Before the queen Alcinous' ſons unfold
The veſts, the robes, and heaps of ſhining gold:
Then to the radiant thrones they move in ſtate:
Aloft, the king in pomp imperial ſate.
Thence to the queen. O partner of our reign,
O ſole belov'd! command thy menial train
A poliſh'd cheſt and ſtately robes to bear,
And healing waters for the bath prepare;

℣. 450. *And never, never may'ſt thou want this ſword.*] It can ſcarce be imagined how greatly this beautiful paſſage is miſrepreſented by Euſtathius. He would have it to imply, *May I never want this ſword*, taking τοὶ adverbially: the preſents of enemies were reckoned fatal; Ulyſſes therefore to avert the omen, prays that he may never have occaſion to have recourſe to this ſword of Euryalus, but keep it amongſt his treaſures as a teſtimony of this reconciliation. This appears to be a very forced interpretation, and diſagreeable to the general import of the reſt of the ſentence: he addreſſes to Euryalus, to whom then can this compliment be naturally paid but to Euryalus? *Thou haſt given me a ſword*, ſays he, *may thy days be ſo peaceable as never to want it!* This is an inſtance of the polite addreſs, and the forgiving temper, of Ulyſſes.

That bath'd, our gueſt may bid his ſorrows ceaſe,
Hear the ſweet ſong, and taſte the feaſt in peace.
A bowl that flames with gold, of wond'rous frame,
Our ſelf we give, memorial of our name:
To raiſe in off'rings to almighty Jove,
And every god that treads the courts above.
Inſtant the queen, obſervant of the king,
Commands her train a ſpacious vaſe to bring,
The ſpacious vaſe with ample ſtreams ſuffice,
Heap high the wood, and bid the flames ariſe.
The flames climb round it with a fierce embrace,
The fuming waters bubble o'er the blaze.
Herſelf the cheſt prepares: in order roll'd
The robes, the veſts are rang'd, and heaps of gold:
And adding a rich dreſs inwrought with art,
A gift expreſſive of her bounteous heart,
Thus ſpoke to Ithacus: To guard with bands
Inſolvable theſe gifts, thy care demands:
Leſt, in thy ſlumbers on the watry main,
The hand of Rapine make our bounty vain.
Then bending with full force, around he roll'd
A labyrinth of bands in fold on fold,
Clos'd with Circaean art. A train attends
Around the bath: the bath the king aſcends:

ỳ. 485. *Clos'd with Circaean art*——] Such paſſages as theſe have more of nature than art, and are too narrative, and different from modern ways of ſpeaking, to be capable of much ornament in poetry. Euſtathius obſerves that keys were not in uſe in theſe ages, but (Un-

(Untaſted joy, ſince that diſaſtrous hour,
He ſail'd ill-fated from Calypſo's bow'r)
Where, happy as the gods that range the ſky,
He feaſted ev'ry ſenſe, with ev'ry joy.
He bathes: the damſels, with officious toil,
Shed ſweets, ſhed unguents in a ſhow'r of oil:
Then o'er his limbs a gorgeous robe he ſpreads,
And to the feaſt magnificently treads.
Full where the dome its ſhining valves expands,
Nauſicaa blooming as a goddeſs ſtands,
With wond'ring eyes the hero ſhe ſurvey'd,
And graceful thus began the royal maid.

were afterwards invented by the Lacedaemonians; but they uſed to bind their carriages with intricate knots. Thus the Gordian knot was famous in antiquity. And this knot of Ulyſſes became a proverb, to expreſs any inſolvable difficulty, ὁ τῦ Ὀδυσσέως δεσμὸς: this is the reaſon why he is ſaid to have learned it from Circe; it was of great eſteem amongſt the ancients, and not being capable to be untied by human art, the invention of it is aſcribed, not to a man, but to a goddeſs.

A poet would now appear ridiculous if he ſhould introduce a goddeſs only to teach his hero ſuch an art, as to tye a knot with intricacy: but we muſt not judge of what has been, from what now is; cuſtoms and arts are never at a ſtay, and conſequently the ideas of cuſtoms and arts are as changeable as thoſe arts and cuſtoms: this knot in all probability was in as high eſtimation formerly, as the fineſt watch-work or machines are at this day; and were a perſon famed for an uncommon skill in ſuch works, it would be no abſurdity in the language of poetry, to aſcribe his knowlege in them to the aſſiſtance of a deity.

Hail god-like ſtranger! and when heav'n reſtores
To thy fond wiſh thy long-expected ſhores,
This ever grateful in remembrance bear,
To me thou ow'ſt, to me, the vital air.
O royal maid, Ulyſſes ſtrait returns,
Whoſe worth the ſplendors of thy race adorns,
So may dread Jove (whoſe arm in vengeance forms
The writhen bolt, and blackens heav'n with ſtorms,)
Reſtore me ſafe, thro' weary wand'rings toſt,
To my dear country's ever-pleaſing coaſt,
As while the ſpirit in this boſom glows,
To thee, my goddeſs, I addreſs my vows;
My life, thy gift I boaſt! He ſaid, and ſate
Faſt by Alcinous on a throne of ſtate.

℣. 510. *To thee, my goddeſs, I addreſs my vows.*] This may ſeem an extravagant compliment, eſpecially in the mouth of the wiſe Ulyſſes, and rather prophane than polite. Dacier commends it as the higheſt piece of addreſs and gallantry; but perhaps it may want explication to reconcile it to decency. Ulyſſes only ſpeaks comparatively, and with relation to that one action of her ſaving his life: 'as therefore, ſays he, I owe my 'thanks to the heavens for giving me life originally, 'ſo I ought to pay my thanks to thee for preſerving it; 'thou haſt been to me as a deity. To preſerve a life, 'is in one ſenſe to give it.' If this appears not to ſoften the expreſſion ſufficiently, it may be aſcribed to an overflow of gratitude in the generous diſpoſition of Ulyſſes; he is ſo touched with the memory of her benevolence and protection, that his ſoul labours for an expreſſion great enough to repreſent it, and no wonder if in this ſtruggle of thought, his words fly out into an exceſſive but laudable boldneſs.

Now each partakes the feaſt, the wine prepares,
Portions the food, and each his portion ſhares.
The bard an herald guides: the gazing throng
Pay low obeyſance as he moves along:
Beneath a ſculptur'd arch he ſits enthron'd,
The peers encircling form an awful round.
Then from the chine, Ulyſſes carves with art
Delicious food, an honorary part:
This, let the maſter of the lyre receive,
A pledge of love! 'tis all a wretch can give.
Lives there a man beneath the ſpacious ſkies,
Who ſacred honours to the bard denies?
The muſe the bard inſpires, exalts his mind;
The muſe indulgent loves th' harmonious kind.
The herald to his hand the charge conveys,
Not fond of flatt'ry, nor unpleas'd with praiſe.
When now the rage of hunger was allay'd,
Thus to the lyriſt wiſe Ulyſſes ſaid.

℣. 519. —— *From the chine Ulyſſes carves with art.*] Were this literally to be tranſlated, it would be, that Ulyſſes cut a piece from the chine of the white-toothed boar, round which there was much fat. This looks like burleſque to a perſon unacquainted with the uſages of antiquity: but it was the higheſt honour that could be paid to Demodocus. The greateſt heroes in the Iliad are thus rewarded after victory, and it was eſteemed an equivalent for all dangers. So that what Ulyſſes here offers to the poet, is offered out of a particular regard and honour to his poetry.

O more than man! thy ſoul the muſe inſpires,
Or Phoebus animates with all his fires:
For who by Phoebus uninform'd, could know
The woe of Greece, and ſing ſo well the woe?
Juſt to the tale, as preſent at the fray,
Or taught the labours of the dreadful day:
The ſong recalls paſt horrors to my eyes,
And bids proud Ilion from her aſhes riſe.

℣. 531. —— *Thy ſoul the muſe inſpires,*
Or Phoebus animates with all his fires.]

Ulyſſes here aſcribes the ſong of Demodocus to immediate inſpiration; and Apollo is made the patron of the poets, as Euſtathius obſerves, becauſe he is is the god of prophecy. He adds, that Homer here again repreſents himſelf in the perſon of Demodocus: it is he who wrote the war of Troy with as much faithfulneſs, as if he had been preſent at it; it is he who had little or no aſſiſtance from former relations of that ſtory, and conſequently receives it from Apollo and the muſes. This is a ſecret but artful inſinuation that we are not to look upon the Iliad as all fiction and fable, but in general as a real hiſtory, related with as much certainty as if the poet had been preſent at thoſe memorable actions.

Plutarch in his chapter of reading poems admires the conduct of Homer, with relation to Ulyſſes: he diverts Demodocus from idle fables, and gives him a noble theme, the deſtruction of Troy. Such ſubjects ſuit well with the ſage character of Ulyſſes. It is for the ſame reaſon that he here paſſes over in ſilence the amour of Mars and Venus, and commends the ſong at the beginning of this book, concerning the contention of the worthies before Troy; an inſtruction, what ſongs a wiſe man ought to hear, and that poets ſhould recite nothing but what may he heard by a wiſe man.

Once more harmonious ſtrike the ſounding ſtring,
Th' Epaean fabric, fram'd by Pallas, ſing:
How ſtern Ulyſſes, furious to deſtroy,
With latent heroes ſack'd imperial Troy,
If faithful thou record the tale of fame,
The god himſelf inſpires thy breaſt with flame:
And mine ſhall be the taſk, henceforth to raiſe
In ev'ry land, thy monument of praiſe.
Full of the god he rais'd his lofty ſtrain,
How the Greeks ruſh'd tumultuous to the main:
How blazing tents illumin'd half the skies,
While from the ſhores the winged navy flies:
How ev'n in Ilion's walls, in deathful bands,
Came the ſtern Greeks by Troy's aſſiſting hands:
All Troy up-heav'd the ſteed; of diff'ring mind,
Various the Trojans counſell'd; part conſign'd

℣. 554. *Various the Trojans counſell'd*——] It is obſervable that the poet gives us only the heads of this ſong, and though he had an opportunity to expatiate and introduce a variety of noble images, by painting the fall of Troy, yet this being foreign to his ſtory, he judiciouſly reſtrains his fancy; and paſſes on to the more immediate actions of the Odyſſey. Virgil, lib. 2. of his Æneis, has tranſlated theſe verſes.

Scinditur incertum ſtudia in contraria vulgus,
At Capys, et quorum melior ſententia menti,
Aut Pelago Danaum inſidias ſuſpectaque dona
Praecipitare jubent, ſubjectiſque urere flammis:
Aut terebrare cavas uteri et tentare latebras.

The monſter to the ſword, part ſentence gave
To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave;
Th' unwiſe award to lodge it in the tow'rs,
An off'ring ſacred to th' immortal pow'rs:
Th' unwiſe prevail, they lodge it in the walls,
And by the gods decree proud Ilion falls;
Deſtruction enters in the treach'rous wood,
And vengeful ſlaughter, fierce for human blood.

He ſung the Greeks ſtern-iſſuing from the ſteed,
How Ilion burns, how all her fathers bleed:
How to thy dome, Deiphobus! aſcends
The Spartan king; how Ithacus attends,
(Horrid as Mars) and how with dire alarms
He fights, ſubdues: for Pallas ſtrings his arms.

Scaliger prefers theſe before thoſe of Homer, and ſays that Homer triſles in deſcribing ſo particularly the diviſions of the Trojan councils: that Virgil chuſes to burn the horſe, rather than deſcribe it as thrown from the rocks: for how ſhould the Trojans raiſe it thither? Such objections are ſcarce worthy of a ſerious anſwer, for it is no difficulty to imagine that the ſame men who heaved this machine into Troy, ſhould be able to raiſe it upon a rock: and as for the former objection, Virgil recites almoſt the ſame diviſions in council as Homer, nay borrows them, with little variation.

Ariſtotle obſerves the great art of Homer, in naturally bringing about the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Alcinous by this ſong. He calls this a rememberance, that is, when a preſent object ſtirs up a paſt image in the memory, as a picture recalls the figure of an abſent friend: thus Ulyſſes hearing Demodocus ſing to the harp his former hardſhips, breaks out into tears, and theſe tears bring about his diſcovery.

Thus while he ſung, Ulyſſes' griefs renew,
Tears bathe his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew:
As ſome fond matron views in mortal fight
Her huſband falling in his country's right:
Frantic thro' claſhing ſwords ſhe runs, ſhe flies,
As ghaſtly pale he groans, and faints, and dies;
Cloſe to his breaſt ſhe grovels on the ground,
And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wound;

℣. 571. *As ſome fond matron*———] This is undoubtedly a very moving and beautiful compariſon; but it may be aſked if it be proper to compare ſo great a hero as Ulyſſes to a woman, the weakneſs of whoſe ſex juſtifies her tears? Beſides ſhe appears to have a ſufficient cauſe for her ſorrows, as being under the greateſt calamities; but why ſhould Ulyſſes weep? Nothing but his valour and ſucceſs is recorded, and why ſhould this be an occaſion of ſorrow? Euſtathius replies, that they who think that Ulyſſes is compared to the matron, miſtake the point of the compariſon: whereas the tears alone of Ulyſſes are intended to be compared to the tears of the matron. It is the ſorrow of the two perſons, not the perſons themſelves, that is repreſented in the compariſon. But there appears no ſufficient cauſe for the tears of Ulyſſes; this objection would not have been made, if the ſubject of the ſong had been conſidered; it ſets before his eyes all the calamities of a long war, all the ſcenes of ſlaughter of friends and enemies that he had beheld in it: it is alſo to be remembered that we have only the abrigement of the ſong, and yet we ſee ſpectacles of horror, blood and commiſeration. Tears diſcover a tender, not an abject ſpirit. Achilles is not leſs a hero for weeping over the aſhes of Patrochus, nor Ulyſſes for lamenting the calamities and deaths of thouſands of his friends.

She cries, ſhe ſhrieks: the fierce inſulting foe
Relentleſs mocks her violence of woe,
To chains condemn'd as wildly ſhe deplores,
A widow, and a ſlave, on foreign ſhores!
So from the ſluices of Ulyſſes' eyes
Faſt fell the tears, and ſighs ſucceeded ſighs:
Conceal'd he griev'd: the king obſerv'd alone
The ſilent tear, and heard the ſecret groan:
Then to the bard aloud: O ceaſe to ſing,
Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful ſtring:
To ev'ry note his tears reſponſive flow,
And his great heart heaves with tumultuous woe;
Thy lay too deeply moves: then ceaſe the lay,
And o'er the banquet every heart be gay:
This ſocial right demands; for him the ſails
Floating in air, invite th' impelling gales:
His are the gifts of love: the wiſe and good
Receive the ſtranger as a brother's blood.
But, friend, diſcover faithful what I crave,
Artful concealment ill becomes the brave:
Say what thy birth, and what the name you bore,
Impos'd by parents in the natal hour?
(For from the natal hour diſtinctive names,
One common right, the great and lowly claims:)
Say from what city, from what regions toſt,
And what inhabitants thoſe regions boaſt?

So ſhalt thou inſtant reach the realm aſſign'd,
In wond'rous ſhips ſelf-mov'd, inſtinct with mind:
No helm ſecures their courſe, no pilot guides,
Like man intelligent, they plow the tides,
Conſcious of every coaſt, and every bay,
That lies beneath the ſun's all-ſeeing ray;
Tho' clouds and darkneſs veil th' encumber'd sky,
Fearleſs thro' darkneſs and thro' clouds they fly:

ỽ. 604. *In wond'rous ſhips ſelf-mov'd, inſtinct with mind.*] There is not a paſſage that more outrages all the rules of credibility than the deſcription of theſe ſhips of Alcinous. The poet inſerts theſe wonders only to ſhew the great dexterity of the Phaeacians in navigation; and indeed it was neceſſary to be very full in the deſcription of their ſkill, who were to convey Ulyſſes home in deſpight of the very god of the ocean. It is for the ſame reaſon that they are deſcribed as ſailing almoſt inviſibly, to eſcape the notice of that god. Antiquity animated every thing in poetry; thus Argo is ſaid to have had a maſt made of Dodonaean oak, indued with the faculty of ſpeech. But this is defending one abſurdity, by inſtancing in a fable equally abſurd; all that can be ſaid in defence of it is, that ſuch extravagant fables were believed, at leaſt by the vulgar, in former ages; and conſequently might be introduced without blame in poetry; if ſo, by whom could a boaſt of this nature be better made, than by a vain Phaeacian? Beſides, theſe extravagancies let Ulyſſes into the humour of the Phaeacians, and in the following books he adapts his ſtory to it, and returns fable for fable. It muſt likewiſe certainly be a great incouragement to Ulyſſes to find himſelf in ſuch hands as could ſo eaſily reſtore him to his country; for it was natural to conclude, that though Alcinous was guilty of great amplification, yet that his ſubjects were very expert navigators.

Tho' tempeſts rage, tho' rolls the ſwelling main,
The ſeas may roll, the tempeſts rage in vain,
Ev'n the ſtern god that o'er the waves preſides,
Safe as they paſs, and ſafe repaſs the tides,
With fury burns; while careleſs they convey
Promiſcuous every gueſt to every bay.
Theſe ears have heard my royal ſire diſcloſe
A dreadful ſtory big with future woes,
How Neptune rag'd, and how by his command
Firm rooted in the ſurge a ſhip ſhould ſtand

ỳ. 619. ——*how by his command*
Firm rooted in the ſurge a ſhip ſhould ſtand.]
The ancients, as Euſtathius obſerves, mark theſe verſes with an obeliſk and aſteriſm. The obelisk ſhewed that they judged what relates to the oracle was miſplaced, the aſteriſm denoted that they thought the verſes very beautiful. For they thought it not probable that Alcinous would have called to memory this prediction and the menace of Neptune, and yet perſiſted to conduct to his own country the enemy of that deity: whereas if this oracle be ſuppoſed to be forgotten by Alcinous, (as it will, if theſe verſes be taken away) then there will be an appearance of truth, that he who was a friend to all ſtrangers, ſhould be perſuaded to land ſo great and worthy a hero as Ulyſſes in his own dominions, and therefore they reject them to the 13th of the Odyſſey. But, as Euſtathius obſerves, Alcinous immediately ſubjoins,

But this the gods may fruſtrate or fulfill,
As ſuits the purpoſe of th' eternal will.

And therefore the verſes may be very proper in this book, for Alcinous believes that the gods might be prevailed upon not to fulfil this denunciation. It has

A monument of wrath: how mound on mound
Should bury theſe proud tow'rs beneath the ground.

been likewiſe remarked that the conduct of Alcinous is very juſtifiable: the Phaeacians had been warned by an oracle, that an evil threatened them for the care they ſhould ſhew to a ſtranger: yet they forbear not to perform an act of piety to Ulyſſes, being perſuaded that men ought to do their duty, and truſt the iſſue to the goodneſs of the gods. This will ſeem to be more probable, if we remember Alcinous is ignorant that Ulyſſes is the perſon intended by the prediction, ſo that he is not guilty of a voluntary oppoſition to the gods, but really acts with piety in aſſiſting his gueſt, and only complies with the common laws of hoſpitality.

It is but a conjecture, yet it is not without probability, that there was a rock which looked like a veſſel, in the enterance of the haven of the Phaeacians: the fable may be built upon this foundation, and becauſe it was invironed by the ocean, the transformation might be aſcribed to the god of it.

℣. 621. ——*How mound on mound*
Should bury theſe proud tow'rs beneath the ground.]

The Greek word is ἀμφικαλύψειν, which does not neceſſarily imply that the city ſhould be buried actually, but that a mountain ſhould ſurround it, or cover it round; and in the 13th book we find that when the ſhip was transformed into a rock, the city continues out of danger. Euſtathius is fully of opinion, that the city was threatened to be overwhelmed by a mountain; the poet, ſays he, invents this fiction to prevent poſterity from ſearching after this iſle of the Phaeacians, and to preſerve his ſtory from detection of falſification; after the ſame manner, as he introduces Neptune, and the rivers of Troy, bearing away the wall which the Greeks had raiſed as a fortification before their navy. But Dacier, in the omiſſions which ſhe inſerts at the end

But this the gods may fruſtrate or fulfill,
As ſuits the purpoſe of th' eternal will.
But ſay thro' what waſte regions haſt thou ſtray'd,
What cuſtoms noted, and what coaſts ſurvey'd?
Poſſeſt by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whoſe boſom tender pity warms?
Say why the fate of Troy awak'd thy cares,
Why heav'd thy boſom, and why flow'd thy tears?
Juſt are the ways of heav'n: from heav'n proceed
The woes of man; heav'n doom'd the Greeks to bleed,
A theme of future ſong! Say then if ſlain
Some dear-lov'd brother preſs'd the Phrygian plain?
Or bled ſome friend? who bore a brother's part,
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart.

of the ſecond volume of her Odyſſey, is of a contrary opinion; for the mountain is not ſaid to cover the city, but to threaten to cover it: as appears from the 13th book of the Odyſſey, where Alcinous commands a ſacrifice to the gods to avert the execution of this denunciation.

But the difference in reality is ſmall, the city is equally threatened to be buried as the veſſel to be tranſformed; and therefore Alcinous might pronounce the ſame fate to both, ſince both were threatened equally by the prediction: it was indeed impoſſible for him to ſpeak after any other manner, for he only repeats the words of the oracle, and cannot foreſee that the ſacrifice of the Phaeacians would appeaſe the anger of Neptune.

℣. 635. *Or bled ſome friend? who bore a brother's part,*
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart.]

This excellent ſentence of Homer at once guides us in the

the choice, and inſtructs us in the regard, that is to be paid to the perſon of a friend. If it be lawful to judge of a man from his writings, Homer had a ſoul ſuſceptible of real friendſhip, and was a lover of ſincerity. It would be endleſs to take notice of every caſual inſtruction inſerted in the Odyſſey; but ſuch ſentences ſhew Homer to have been a man of an amiable character as well as excellent in poetry: the great abhorrence he had of lies cannot be more ſtrongly expreſt than in thoſe two paſſages in the ninth Iliad, and in the 14th Odyſſey: in the firſt of which he makes the man of the greateſt ſoul, Achilles, bear teſtimony to his averſion of them; and in the latter declares, that 'the pooreſt man, though compelled by the utmoſt neceſſity, ought not to ſtoop to 'ſuch a practice.' In this place he ſhews that worth creates a kind of relation, and that we are to look upon a worthy friend, as a brother.

This book takes up the whole thirty-third day, and part of the evening: for the council opens in the morning, and at ſun-ſetting the Phaeacians return to the palace from the games; after which Ulyſſes bathes and ſups, and ſpends ſome time of the evening in diſcourſing, and hearing the ſongs of Demodocus. Then Alcinous requeſts him to relate his own ſtory, which he begins in the next book, and continues it through the four ſubſequent books of the Odyſſey.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The adventures of the Cicons, Lotophagi, and Cyclops.

Ulyſſes begins the relation of his adventures; how after the deſtruction of Troy, he made an incurſion on the Cicons, by whom they were repulſed; and meeting with a ſtorm, were driven to the coaſt of the Lotophagi. From thence they ſailed to the land of the Cyclops, whoſe manners and ſituation are particularly characteriſed. The giant Polyphemus and his cave deſcribed: the uſage Ulyſſes and his companions met there; and laſtly, the method and artifice by which he eſcaped.

THEN thus Ulyſſes. Thou, whom firſt in ſway
As firſt in virtue, theſe thy realms obey!

As we are now come to the epiſodical part of the Odyſſey, it may be thought neceſſary to ſpeak ſomething of the nature of epiſodes.

As the action of the epic is always one, entire, and great action; ſo the moſt trivial epiſodes muſt be ſo interwoven with it, as to be neceſſary parts, or convenient, as Mr. Dryden obſerves, to carry on the main deſign; either ſo neceſſary, as without them the poem muſt be imperfect, or ſo convenient, that no others can be imagined more ſuitable to the place in which they ſtand: there is nothing to be left void in a firm building, even the cavities ought not to be filled up with rubbiſh deſtructive to the ſtrength of it, but with materials

of the ſame kind, though of leſs pieces, and fitted to the main fabric.

Ariſtotle tells us, that what is comprehended in the firſt platform of the fable is proper, the reſt is epiſode: let us examine the Odyſſey by this rule: the groundwork of the poem is, a prince abſent from his country ſeveral years, Neptune hinders his return, yet at laſt he breaks through all obſtacles, and returns, where he finds great diſorders, the authors of which he puniſhes, and reſtores peace to his kingdoms. This is all that is eſſential to the model; this the poet is not at liberty to change; this is ſo neceſſary, that any alteration deſtroys the deſign, ſpoils the fable, and makes another poem of it. But epiſodes are changeable; for inſtance, though it was neceſſary that Ulyſſes being abſent ſhould ſpend ſeveral years with foreign princes, yet it was not neceſſary that one of theſe princes ſhould be Antiphates, another Alcinous, or that Circe or Calypſo ſhould be the perſons who entertained him: it was in the poet's choice to have changed theſe perſons and ſtates, without changing his deſign or fable. Thus though theſe adventures or epiſodes become parts of the ſubject after they are choſen, yet they are not originally eſſential to the ſubject. But in what ſenſe then are they neceſſary? The reply is, Since the abſence of Ulyſſes was abſolutely neceſſary, it follows that not being at home, he muſt be in ſome other country; and therefore though the poet was at liberty to make uſe of none of theſe particular adventures, yet it was not in his choice to make uſe of none at all; if theſe had been omitted, he muſt have ſubſtituted others, or elſe he would have omitted part of the matter contained in his model, viz. the adventures of a perſon long abſent from his country; and the poem would have been defective. So that epiſodes are not actions, but parts of an action. It is in poetry, as Ariſtotle obſerves, as in painting; a painter puts many actions into one piece, but they all conſpire to form once entire and perfect action: a poet likewiſe uſes

How ſweet the products of a peaceful reign!
The heav'n-taught poet, and enchanting ſtrain:

many epiſodes, but all thoſe epiſodes taken ſeparately finiſh nothing, they are but imperfect members, which all together make one and the ſame action, like the parts of a human body, they all conſpire to conſtitute the whole man.

In a word, the epiſodes of Homer are complete epiſodes; they are proper to the ſubject, becauſe they are drawn from the ground of the fable; they are ſo joined to the principal action, that one is the neceſſary conſequence of the other, either truly or probably: and laſtly, they are imperfect members which do not make a complete and finiſhed body; for an epiſode that makes a complete action, cannot be part of a principal action, as is eſſential to all epiſodes.

An epiſode may then be defined, 'a neceſſary part of 'an action, extended by probable circumſtances.' They are part of an action, for they are not added to the principal action, but only dilate and amplify that principal action: thus the poet to ſhew the ſufferings of Ulyſſes brings in the ſeveral epiſodes of Polyphemus, Scylla, the Sirens, *etc.* But why ſhould the words 'extended 'by probable circumſtances' enter the definition? Becauſe the ſufferings of Ulyſſes are propoſed in the model of the fable in general only, but by relating the circumſtances, the manner how he ſuffered is diſcovered, and this connects it with the principal action, and ſhews very evidently the neceſſary relation the epiſode bears to the main deſign of the Odyſſey. What I have ſaid I hope plainly diſcovers the difference between the epiſodic and principal action, as well as the nature of epiſodes. See Boſſu more largely upon this ſubject.

℣. 3. *How ſweet the products of a peaceful reign!* etc.] This paſſage has given great joy to the critics, as it has afforded them the ill-natured pleaſure of railing, and the ſatisfaction of believing they have found a fault in a good

The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feaſt, 5
A land rejoicing, and a people bleſt.

writer. It is fitter, ſay they, for the mouth of Epicurus than for the ſage Ulyſſes, to extol the pleaſures of feaſting and drinking in this manner: he whom the poet propoſes as the ſtandard of human wiſdom, ſays Rapin, ſuffers himſelf to be made drunk by the Phaeacians. But it may rather be imagined, that the critic was not very ſober when he made the reflection; for there is not the leaſt appearance of a reaſon for that imputation. Plato indeed in his third book *de Repub.* writes, that what Ulyſſes here ſpeaks is no very proper example of temperance: but every body knows that Plato, with reſpect to Homer, wrote with great partiality. Athenaeus in his twelfth book gives us the following interpretation. Ulyſſes accommodates his diſcourſe to the preſent occaſion; he in appearance approves of the voluptuous lives of the Phaeacians, and having heard Alcinous before ſay, that feaſting and ſinging, *etc.* was their ſupreme delight; he by a ſeaſonable flattery ſeems to comply with their inclinations; it being the moſt proper method to attain his deſires of being conveyed to his own country. He compares Ulyſſes to the Polypus, which is fabled to aſſume the colour of every rock to which he approaches: thus Sophocles,

Νόει πρὸς ἀνδρὶ σῶμα Πηλύπου, ὅπως
Πέτρᾳ τραπέσθαι γνισίᾳ φρονήματος.

That is, 'In your acceſſes to mankind obſerve the Poly-'pus, and adapt yourſelf to the humour of the perſon 'to whom you apply.' Euſtathius obſerves that this paſſage has been condemned, but he defends it after the very ſame way with Athenaeus.

It is not impoſſible but that there may be ſome compliance with the nature and manners of the Phaeacians, eſpecially becauſe Ulyſſes is always deſcribed as an artful man, not without ſome mixture of diſſimulation:

How goodly ſeems it, ever to employ
Man's ſocial days in union and in joy?

but it is no difficult matter to take the paſſage literally, and yet give it an irreproachable ſenſe. Ulyſſes had gone through innumerable calamities, he had lived to ſee a great part of Europe and Aſia laid deſolate by a bloody war; and after ſo many troubles, he arrives among a nation that was unacquainted with all the miſeries of war, where all the people were happy, and paſſed their lives in eaſe and pleaſures: this calm life fills him with admiration, and he artfully praiſes what he found praiſe-worthy in it; namely, the entertainments and muſic, and paſſes over the gallantries of the people, as Dacier obſerves, without any mention. Maximus Tyrius fully vindicates Homer. It is my opinion, ſays that author, that the poet, by repreſenting theſe gueſts in the midſt of their entertainments, delighted with the ſong and muſic, intended to recommend a more noble pleaſure than eating and drinking, ſuch a pleaſure as a wiſe man may imitate, by approving the better part, and rejecting the worſe, and chuſing to pleaſe the ear rather than the belly. 12 Diſſert.

If we underſtand the paſſage otherwiſe, the meaning may be this. I am perſuaded, ſays Ulyſſes, that the moſt agreeable end which a king can propoſe, is to ſee a whole nation in univerſal joy, when muſic and feaſtings are in every houſe, when plenty is on every table, and wines to entertain every gueſt: this to me appears a ſtate of the greateſt felicity.

In this ſenſe Ulyſſes pays Alcinous a very agreeable compliment; as it is certainly the moſt glorious aim of a king to make his ſubjects happy, and diffuſe an univerſal joy through his dominions: he muſt be a rigid cenſor indeed who blames ſuch pleaſures as theſe, which have nothing contrary in them to virtue and ſtrict morality; eſpecially as they here bear a beautiful oppoſition to all the horrors which Ulyſſes had ſeen in the wars of Troy,

The plenteous board high heap'd with cates divine,
And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine.

Amid theſe joys, why ſeeks thy mind to know
Th' unhappy ſeries of a wand'rer's woe?
Remembrance ſad, whoſe image to review
Alas! muſt open all my wounds anew.
And oh, what firſt, what laſt ſhall I relate,
Of woes unnumber'd ſent by heav'n and fate?

Know firſt the man (tho' now a wretch diſtreſt)
Who hopes thee, monarch! for his future gueſt.
Behold Ulyſſes! no ignoble name,
Earth ſounds my wiſdom, and high heav'n my fame.

and ſhew Phaeacia as happy as Troy was miſerable. I will only add, that this agrees with the oriental way of ſpeaking; and in the poetical parts of the ſcriptures, the voice of melody, feaſting and dancing, are uſed to expreſs the happineſs of a nation.

ỳ. 19. *Behold Ulyſſes!*——] The poet begins with declaring the name of Ulyſſes: the Phaeacians had already been acquainted with it by the ſong of Demodocus, and therefore it could not fail of raiſing the utmoſt attention and curioſity (as Euſtathius obſerves) of the whole aſſembly, to hear the ſtory of ſo great an hero. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulyſſes is oſtentatious, and ſpeaks of himſelf too favourably; but the neceſſity of it will appear, if we conſider that Ulyſſes had nothing but his perſonal qualifications to engage the Phaeacians in his favour. It was therefore requiſite to make thoſe qualifications known, and this was not poſſible to be done but by his own relation, he being a ſtranger among ſtrangers. Beſides, he ſpeaks before a vain-glorious people, who thought even boaſting no fault. It may be queſtioned whether Virgil be ſo happy in thoſe

reſpects, when he puts almoſt the ſame words into the mouth of Æneas.

Sum pius Æneas, raptos qui ex hoſte penates
Claſſe veho mecum, fama ſuper aethera notus.

For his boaſt contributes nothing to the re-eſtabliſhment of his affairs, for he ſpeaks to the goddeſs Venus. Yet Scaliger infinitely prefers Virgil before Homer, though there be no other difference in the words, than *raptos qui ex hoſte penates*, inſtead of

----------Ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν
Ἀνθρώποισι μέλω----------

He queſtions whether ſubtilties or δόλοι, ever raiſed any perſon's glory to the heavens; whereas that is the reward of piety. But the word is to be underſtood to imply wiſdom, and all the ſtratagems of war, *etc.* according to the firſt verſe of the Odyſſey,

The man for wiſdom's various arts renown'd.

He is the leſs ſevere upon the verſes immediately preceding,

Σοὶ δ' ἐμὰ κήδεα θυμὸς ἐπετράπετο ϛονόεντα, *etc.*

which lines are undoubtedly very beautiful, and admirably expreſs the number of the ſufferings of Ulyſſes; the multitude of them is ſo great, that they almoſt confound him; and he ſeems at a loſs where to begin, how to proceed, or where to end; and they agree very well with the propoſition in the opening of the Odyſſey, which was to relate the ſufferings of a brave man. The verſes which Scaliger quotes are

Infandum regina jubes renovare dolorem;
Trojanas ut opes, etc.

Omnia ſane non ſine ſua divinitate, and he concludes, that Virgil has not ſo much imitated Homer, as taught us how Homer ought to have wrote.

My native ſoil is Ithaca the fair,
Where high Neritus waves his woods in air:
Dulichium, Same, and Zacynthus crown'd
With ſhady mountains, ſpread their iſles around.
(Theſe to the north and night's dark regions run,
Thoſe to Aurora and the riſing ſun.)
Low lies our iſle, yet bleſt in fruitful ſtores;
Strong are her ſons, tho' rocky are her ſhores;
And none, ah none ſo lovely to my ſight,
Of all the lands that heav'n o'erſpreads with light.

℣. 21.——*Ithaca the fair, Where high Neritus, etc.*] Euſtathius gives various interpretations of this poſition of Ithaca; ſome underſtand it to ſignify that it lies low; others explain it to ſignify that it is of low poſition, but high with reſpect to the neighbouring iſlands; others take παντυπερτάτη *(excellentiſſima)* in another ſenſe to imply the excellence of the country, which though it lies low, is productive of brave inhabitants, for Homer immediately adds ἀγαθὴ κουροτρόφος. Strabo gives a different expoſition; Ithaca is χθαμαλὴ, as it lies near to the continent, and παντυπερτάτη, as it is the utmoſt of all the iſlands towards the north, πρὸς ἄρκτον, for thus πρὸς ζόφον is to be underſtood. So that Ithaca, adds he, is not of a low ſituation, but as it lies oppoſed to the continent, nor the moſt lofty (ὑψηλοτάτη) but the moſt extreme of the northern iſlands; for ſo παντυπερτάτη ſignifies. Dacier differs from Strabo in the explication of πρὸς ἠῶ τ' ἠέλιόν τε, which he believes to mean the ſouth; ſhe applies the words to the eaſt, or ſouth-eaſt, and appeals to the maps which ſo deſcribe it. It is the moſt northern of the iſlands, and joins to the continent of Epirus; it has Dulichium on the eaſt, and on the ſouth Samos and Zacynthus.

In vain Calypſo long conſtrain'd my ſtay,
With ſweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
With all her charms as vainly Circe ſtrove,
And added magic, to ſecure my love.
In pomps or joys, the palace or the grott,
My country's image never was forgot,
My abſent parents roſe before my ſight,
And diſtant lay contentment and delight.
Hear then the woes, which mighty Jove ordain'd
To wait my paſſage from the Trojan land.
The winds from Ilion to the Cicons' ſhore,
Beneath cold Iſmarus, our veſſels bore.

ỳ. 31. *In vain Calypſo*——] Euſtathius obſerves, that Ulyſſes repeats his refuſal of the goddeſs Calypſo and Circe in the ſame words, to ſhew Alcinous, by a ſecret denial, that he could not be induced to ſtay from his country, or marry his daughter: he calls Circe Δολόεσσα, becauſe ſhe is ſkilled in magical incantations: he deſcribes Ithaca with all its inconveniencies, to convince Alcinous of his veracity, and that he will not deceive him in other circumſtances, when he gives ſo diſadvantageous a character of a country for which he expreſſes ſo great a fondneſs; and laſtly, in relating the death of his friends, he ſeems to be guilty of a tautology, in θάνατόν τε μόρον τε. But Aulus Gellius gives us the reaſon of it, *Atrocitatem rei bis idem dicendo auxit, inculcavitque, non igitur illa ejuſdem ſignificationis repetitio, ignava et frigida videri debet.*

ỳ. 41. *To the Cicons' ſhore.*] Here is the natural and true beginning of the Odyſſey, which comprehends all the ſufferings of Ulyſſes, and theſe ſufferings take their date immediately after his leaving the ſhores of Troy; from that moment he endeavours to return to his own

We boldly landed on the hoſtile place,
And ſack'd the city, and deſtroy'd the race,

country, and all the difficulties he meets with in returning, enter into the ſubject of the poem. But it may then be aſked, if the Odyſſey does not take up the ſpace of ten years, ſince Ulyſſes waſtes ſo many in his return; and is not this contrary to the nature of epic poetry, which is agreed muſt not at the longeſt exceed the duration of one year, or rather campaign? The anſwer is, the poet lets all the time paſs which exceeds the bounds of epic action, before he opens the poem; thus Ulyſſes ſpends ſome time before he arrives at the iſland of Circe, with her he continues one year, and ſeven with Calypſo; he begins artificially at the concluſion of the action, and finds an opportunity to repeat the moſt conſiderable and neceſſary incidents which preceded the opening of the Odyſſey; by this method he reduces the duration of it into leſs compaſs than the ſpace of two months. This conduct is abſolutely neceſſary, for from the time that the poet introduces his hero upon the ſtage, he ought to continue his action to the very end of it, that he may never afterwards appear idle or out of motion: this is verified in Ulyſſes; from the moment he leaves the iſland Ogygia to the death of the ſuitors, he is never out of view, never idle; he is always either in action, or preparing for it, 'till he is re-eſtabliſhed in his dominions. If the poet had followed the natural order of the action, he, like Lucan, would not have wrote an epic poem, but an hiſtory in verſe.

℣. 44. *And ſack'd the city*——] The poet aſſigns no reaſon why Ulyſſes deſtroys this city of the Ciconians, but we may learn from the Iliad, that they were auxiliaries of Troy, book the ſecond.

With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,
Sprung from Troezenian Coeus, lov'd of Jove.

And therefore Ulyſſes aſſaults them as enemies. Euſtath.

But

Their wives made captive, their poſſeſſions ſhar'd,
And ev'ry ſoldier found a like reward.
I then advis'd to fly; not ſo the reſt,
Who ſtay'd to revel, and prolong the feaſt:
The fatted ſheep and ſable bulls they ſlay,
And bowls fly round, and riot waſtes the day.
Mean time the Cicons, to their holds retir'd,
Call on the Cicons, with new fury fir'd;
With early morn the gather'd country ſwarms,
And all the continent is bright with arms:
Thick as the budding leaves or riſing flow'rs
O'erſpread the land, when ſpring deſcends in ſhow'rs:
All expert ſoldiers, ſkill'd on foot to dare,
Or from the bounding courſer urge the war.
Now fortune changes (ſo the fates ordain)
Our hour was come, to taſte our ſhare of pain.
Cloſe at the ſhips the bloody fight began,
Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
Long as the morning ſun increaſing bright
O'er heav'n's pure azure ſpread the growing light,
Promiſcuous death the form of war confounds,
Each adverſe battle gor'd with equal wounds:
But when his evening wheels o'erhung the main,
Then conqueſt crown'd the fierce Ciconian train.
Six brave companions from each ſhip we loſt,
The reſt eſcape in haſte, and quit the coaſt.

ỳ. 69. *Six brave companions from each ſhip we loſt.*] This is one of the paſſages which fell under the cenſure of Zoilus; it is very improbable, ſays that critic,

With ſails outſpread we fly th' unequal ſtrife,
Sad for their loſs, but joyful of our life.
Yet as we fled, our fellows rites we pay'd,
And thrice we call'd on each unhappy ſhade.
Mean-while the god, whoſe hand the thunder forms,
Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heav'n with ſtorms:

that each veſſel ſhould loſe ſix men exactly, this ſeems a too equal diſtribution to be true, conſidering the chance of battle. But it has been anſwered, that Ulyſſes had twelve veſſels, and that in this ingagement he loſt ſeventy-two ſoldiers; ſo that the meaning is, that taking the total of his loſs, and dividing it equally through the whole fleet, he found it amounted exactly to ſix men in every veſſel. This will appear to be a true ſolution, if we remember that there was a neceſſity to ſupply the loſs of any one ſhip out of the others that had ſuffered leſs: ſo that though one veſſel loſt more than the reſt, yet being recruited equally from the reſt of the fleet, there would be exactly ſix men wanting in every veſſel. Euſtathius.

ϒ. 74. *And thrice we call'd on each unhappy ſhade.*] This paſſage preſerves a piece of antiquity: it was the cuſtom of the Grecians, when their friends died upon foreign ſhores, to uſe this ceremony of recalling their ſouls, though they obtained not their bodies, believing by this method that they tranſported them to their own country: Pindar mentions the ſame practice,

Κίλεῖαι γὰρ ἐὰν
Ψυχὰν νόμιζαι Φρίξος, etc.

That is, 'Phrixus commands thee to call his ſoul into 'his own country.' Thus the Athenians, when they loſt any men at ſea, went to the ſhores, and calling thrice on their names, raiſed a cenotaph or empty monument to their memories; by performing which ſolem-

Wide o'er the waſte the rage of Boreas ſweeps,
And night ruſh'd headlong on the ſhaded deeps,
Now here, now there, the giddy ſhips are born,
And all the rattling ſhrouds in fragments torn.
We furl'd the ſail, we ply'd the lab'ring oar,
Took down our maſts, and row'd our ſhips to ſhore.
Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay.
But the third morning when Aurora brings,
We rear the maſts, we ſpread the canvas wings:
Refreſh'd, and careleſs on the deck reclin'd,
We ſit, and truſt the pilot and the wind.
Then to my native country had I ſail'd;
But, the cape doubled, adverſe winds prevail'd.
Strong was the tide, which by the northern blaſt
Impell'd, our veſſels on Cythera caſt.
Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempeſt bore
Far wide in ocean, and from ſight of ſhore:

nity, they invited the ſhades of the departed to return, and performed all rites as if the bodies of the dead had really been buried by them in their ſepulchres. Euſtath.

The Romans as well as the Greeks followed the ſame cuſtom: thus Virgil:

——*Et magna Manes ter voce vocavi.*

The occaſion of this practice aroſe from the opinion, that the ſouls of the departed were not admitted into the ſtate of the happy, without the performance of the ſepulchral ſolemnities.

The tenth we touch'd, by various errors toſt,
The land of Lotos, and the flow'ry coaſt.

℣. 95. *The tenth we touch'd———*
The land of Lotos——]

This paſſage has given occaſion for much controverſy; for ſince the Lotophagi in reality are diſtant from the Malean cape twenty-two thouſand five hundred ſtades, Ulyſſes muſt ſail above two thouſand every day, if in nine days he ſailed to the Lotophagi. This objection would be unanſwerable, if we place that nation in the Atlantic ocean, but Dacier obſerves from Strabo, that Polybius examined this point, and thus gives us the reſult of it. This great hiſtorian maintains, that Homer has not placed the Lotophagi in the Atlantic ocean, as he does the iſlands of Circe and Calypſo, becauſe it was improbable that in the compaſs of ten days the moſt favourable winds could have carried Ulyſſes from the Malean cape into that ocean; it therefore follows, that the poet has given us the true ſituation of this nation, conformably to geography, and placed it, as it really lies, in the Mediterranean; now in ten days a good wind will carry a veſſel from Malea into the Mediterranean, as Homer relates.

This is an inſtance that Homer ſometimes follows truth without fiction, at other times diſguiſes it. But I confeſs I think Homer's poetry would have been as beautiful if he had deſcribed all his iſlands in their true poſitions: his inconſtancy, in this point, may ſeem to introduce confuſion and ambiguity, when the truth would have been more clear, and as beautiful in his poetry.

Nothing can better ſhew the great deference which former ages payed Homer, than theſe defences of the learned ancients; they continually aſcribe his deviations from truth, (as in the inſtance before us) to deſign, not to ignorance; to his art as a poet, and not to want of ſkill as a geographer. In a writer of leſs fame, ſuch relati-

We climb'd the beach, and ſprings of water found,
Then ſpread our haſty banquet on the ground.
Three men were ſent, deputed from the crew,
(An herald one) the dubious coaſt to view,
And learn what habitants poſſeſt the place.
They went, and found a hoſpitable race;
Not prone to ill, nor ſtrange to foreign gueſt,
They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feaſt;
The trees around them all their food produce,
Lotos the name, divine, nectarious juice!

ons might be thought errors, but in Homer, they are either underſtood to be no errors, or if errors, they are vindicated by the greateſt names of antiquity.

Euſtathius adds, that the ancients diſagree about this iſland: ſome place it about Cyrene, from Mauruſia of the African Moors: it is alſo named Meninx, and lies upon the African coaſt, near the leſſer Syrte. It is about three hundred and fifty ſtades in length, and ſomewhat leſs in breadth: it is alſo named Lotophagitis from Lotos.

ỳ. 100. *An herald one.*] The reaſon why the poet mentions the herald in particular, is becauſe his office was ſacred; and by the common law of nations his perſon inviolable: Ulyſſes therefore joins an herald in this commiſſion, for the greater ſecurity of thoſe whom he ſends to ſearch the country.

ỳ. 106. *Lotos.*] Euſtathius aſſures us, that there are various kinds of it. It has been a queſtion whether it is a herb, a root or a tree: he is of opinion, that Homer ſpeaks of it as an herb; for he calls it ἄνθινον εἶδαρ, and that the word ἐρέπ]εσθαι is in its proper ſenſe applied to the grazing of beaſts, and therefore he judges it not to be a tree, or root. He adds, there is an Ægyptian Lotos, which, as Herodotus affirms, grows

(Thence call'd Lotophagi) which whoſo taſtes,
Inſatiate riots in the ſweet repaſts,
Nor other home nor other care intends,
But quits his houſe, his country, and his friends: 110

in great abundance along the Nile in the time of its inundations; it reſembles (ſays that hiſtorian in his Euterpe) a lily, the Ægyptians dry it in the ſun, then take the pulp out of it, which grows like the head of a poppy, and bake it as bread: this kind of it agrees likewiſe with the Ἄνθινον εἶδαρ of Homer. Athenaeus writes of the Lybian Lotos in the fourteenth book of his Deipnoſophiſt; he quotes the words of Polybius in the twelfth book of his hiſtory, now not extant; that hiſtorian ſpeaks of it as an eye-witneſs, having examined the nature of it. 'The Lotos is a tree of no great 'height, rough and thorny: it bears a green leaf, ſome-'what thicker and broader than that of the bramble or 'briar; its fruit at firſt is like the ripe berries of the 'myrtle, both in ſize and colour, but when it ripens it 'turns to purple; it is then about the bigneſs of an o-'live, it is round, and contains a very ſmall kernel; 'when it is ripe they gather it, and bruiſing it among 'bread corn, they put it up into a veſſel, and keep it as 'food for their ſlaves; they dreſs it after the ſame manner 'for their other domeſtics, but firſt take out the kernel 'from it: it has the taſte of a fig, or dates, but is of a 'far better ſmell: they likewiſe make a wine of it, by 'ſteeping and bruiſing it in water; it has a very agree-'able taſte, like wine tempered with honey. They drink 'it without mixing it with water, but it will not keep a-'bove ten days, they therefore make it only in ſmall 'quantities for immediate uſe.' Perhaps it was this laſt kind of Lotos, which the companions of Ulyſſes taſted; and if it was thus prepared, it gives a reaſon why they were overcome with it; for being a wine, it had the power of intoxication.

The three we ſent, from off th' inchanting ground
We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound:
The reſt in haſte forſook the pleaſing ſhore,
Or, the charm taſted, had return'd no more.
Now plac'd in order, on their banks they ſweep
The ſea's ſmooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
With heavy hearts we labour thro' the tyde,
To coaſts unknown, and oceans yet untry'd.
The land of Cyclops firſt; a ſavage kind,
Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd:

℣. 114. *The charm once taſted, had return'd no more.*] It muſt be confeſſed, that the effects of this Lotos are extraordinary, and ſeem fabulous: how then ſhall we reconcile the relation to credibility? The foundation of it might perhaps be no more than this: the companions of Ulyſſes might be willing to ſettle among theſe Lotophagi, being won by the pleaſure of the place, and tired with a life of danger and the perils of ſeas. Or perhaps it is only an allegory, to teach us that thoſe who indulge themſelves in pleaſures, are with difficulty withdrawn from them, and want an Ulyſſes to lead them by a kind of violence into the paths of glory.

℣. 119. *The land of Cyclops firſt——*] Homer here confines himſelf to the true geography of Sicily: for, in reality, a ſhip may eaſily ſail in one day from the land of the Lotophagi to Sicily: theſe Cyclops inhabited the weſtern part of that iſland, about Drepane and Lilybaeum. Bochart ſhews us, that they derive their name from the place of their habitation; for the Phaeacians call them Chek-lub, by contraction for Chek-lelub; that is, the gulph of Lilybaeum, or the men who dwell about the Lilybaean gulph. The Greeks (who underſtood not the Phaeacian language) formed the word Cyclop, from Chek-lub, from the affinity of ſound; which word

Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and ſow,
They all their products to free nature owe.

in the Greek language, ſignifying a circular eye, might give occaſion to fable that they had but one large round eye in the middle of their foreheads. Dacier.

Euſtathius tells us, that the eye of Cyclops is an allegory, to repreſent that in anger, or any other violent paſſion, men ſee but one ſingle object, as that paſſion directs, or ſee but with one eye: εἰς ἕν τι, καὶ μόνον ἐφορᾷ: and that paſſion transforms us into a kind of ſavages, and makes us brutal and ſanguinary, like this Polypheme; and he that by reaſon extinguiſhes ſuch a paſſion, may like Ulyſſes be ſaid to put out that eye that made him ſee but one ſingle object.

I have already given another reaſon of this fiction; namely their wearing a head-piece, or martial vizor, that had but one ſight through it. The vulgar form their judgments from appearances: and a mariner, who paſſed theſe coaſts at a diſtance, obſerving the reſemblance of a broad eye in the forehead of one of theſe Cyclops, might relate it accordingly, and impoſe it as a truth upon the credulity of the ignorant: it is notorious that things equally monſtrous have found belief in all ages.

But it may be aſked, if there were any ſuch perſons who bore the name of Cyclops? No leſs an hiſtorian than Thucydides informs us, that Sicily was at firſt poſſeſſed and inhabited by giants, by the Laeſtrigons and Cyclops, a barbarous and inhuman people: but he adds, that theſe ſavages dwelt only in one part of that iſland.

Cedrenus gives us an exact deſcription of the Cyclops: Ἐκεῖθεν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐμπίπ]ει Κύκλωπι ἐν Σικελίᾳ ἔχ ἑνὶ ὀφθαλμῷ, *etc.* 'Ulyſſes fell among the Cyclops 'in Sicily, a people not one-eyed, according to the 'Mythologiſts, but men like other men, only of a 'more gigantic ſtature, and of a barbarous and ſavage

The ſoil untill'd a ready harveſt yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
Spontaneous wines from weighty cluſters pour,
And Jove deſcends in each prolific ſhow'r,
By theſe no ſtatutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne,

'temper.' From this deſcription, we may ſee what Homer writes as a poet, and what as an hiſtorian; he paints theſe people in general agreeably to their perſons, only diſguiſes ſome features, to give an ornament to his relation, and to introduce the Marvellous, which demands a place chiefly in epic poetry.

What Homer ſpeaks of the fertility of Sicily, is agreeable to hiſtory: it was called anciently *Romani Imperii Horreum*. Pliny, lib. x. cap. 10. writes, that the Leontine plains bear for every grain of corn, an hundred. Diodorus Siculus relates in his hiſtory what Homer ſpeaks in poetry, that the fields of Leontium yield wheat without the culture of the huſbandman: he was an eye-witneſs, being a native of the iſland. From hence in general it may be obſerved, that where-ever we can trace Homer, we find, if not hiſtoric truth, yet the reſemblance of it; that is, as plain truth as can be related without converting his poem into an hiſtory.

℣. 127. *By theſe no ſtatutes and no rights are known,*
No council held, no monarch fills the throne.]

Plato (obſerves Spondanus) in his third book of laws, treats of government as practiſed in the firſt ages of the world; and refers to this paſſage of Homer; 'Mankind 'was originally independant, every maſter of a family 'was a kind of king of his family, and reigned over his 'wife and children like the Cyclopeans," according to the expreſſion of Homer,

Τοῖσιν δ' οὔτ' ἀγοραὶ βουληφόροι, οὔτε θέμιστες.

Ariſtotle likewiſe complains, that even in his times, in

But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell,
Or deep in caves whoſe entrance leads to hell. 130

many places, men lived without laws, according to their own fancies, ζῇ ἕκαστος ὡς βούλεται, κυκλωπικῶς θεμιστεύων, παίδων, ἢ ἀλόχου, referring likewiſe to this paſſage of Homer.

Dacier adds from Plato, that after the deluge, three manners of life ſucceeded among mankind; the firſt was rude and ſavage; men were afraid of a ſecond flood, and therefore inhabited the ſummits of mountains, without any dependence upon one another, and each was abſolute in his own family: the ſecond was leſs brutal; as the fear of the deluge wore away by degrees, they deſcended towards the bottom of mountains, and began to have ſome intercourſe: the third was more poliſhed; when a full ſecurity from the apprehenſions of a flood was eſtabliſhed by time, they then began to inhabit the plains, and a more general commerce by degrees prevailing, they entered into ſocieties, and eſtabliſhed laws for the general good of the whole community. Theſe Cyclopeans maintained the firſt ſtate of life in the days of Ulyſſes; they had no intercourſe with other ſocieties, by reaſon of their barbarities, and conſequently their manners were not at all poliſhed by the general laws of humanity. This account agrees excellently with the holy ſcriptures, and perhaps Plato borrowed it from the writings of Moſes; after the deluge men retreated to the mountains for fear of a ſecond flood; their chief riches, like theſe Cyclopeans, conſiſted in flocks and herds; and every maſter of a family ruled his houſe without any controul or ſubordination.

ỳ. 129. *But high on hills——or deep in caves.*] This is ſaid, to give an air of probability to the revenge which Ulyſſes takes upon this giant, and indeed to the whole ſtory. He deſcribes his ſolitary life, to ſhew that he was utterly deſtitute of aſſiſtance; and it is for the ſame reaſon, continues Euſtathius, that the poet relates

Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
Heedleſs of others, to his own ſevere.

Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coaſts, there lay
An iſle, whoſe hills their ſubject fields ſurvey;
Its name Lachaea, crown'd with many a grove,
Where ſavage goats thro' pathleſs thickets rove:
No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
Or wretched hunters thro' the wint'ry cold
Purſue their flight, but leave them ſafe to bound
From hill to hill, o'er all the deſart ground:
Nor knows the ſoil to feed the fleecy care,
Or feels the labours of the crooked ſhare,
But uninhabited, untill'd, unſown
It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
For there no veſſel with vermilion prore,
Or bark of traffic, glides from ſhore to ſhore;
The rugged race of ſavages, unſkill'd
The ſeas to traverſe, or the ſhips to build,

that he left his fleet under a deſart neighbouring iſland, namely, to make it probable, that the Cyclops could not ſeize it, or purſue Ulyſſes, having no ſhipping.

℣. 134. *An iſle, whoſe hills*, etc.] This little iſle is now called Æguſa, which ſignifies the iſle of goats. Cluverius deſcribes it after the manner of Homer, *Prata mollia, et irrigua, ſolum fertile, portum commodum, fontes limpidos*. It is not certain whether the poet gives any name to it; perhaps it had not received any in thoſe ages, it being without inhabitants; though ſome take λαχεια for a proper name, as is obſerved by Euſtathius.

Gaze on the coaſt, nor cultivate the ſoil,
Unlearn'd in all th' induſtrious arts of toil.
Yet here all products and all plants abound,
Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
Fields waving high with heavy crops are ſeen,
And vines that flouriſh in eternal green,
Refreſhing meads along the murm'ring main,
And fountains ſtreaming down the fruitful plain.
A port there is, inclos'd on either ſide,
Where ſhips may reſt, unanchor'd and unty'd;
'Till the glad mariners incline to ſail,
And the ſea whitens with the riſing gale.
High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock
In living rills a guſhing fountain broke:
Around it, and above, for ever green
The buſhing alders form'd a ſhady ſcene.
Hither ſome fav'ring god, beyond our thought,
Thro' all-ſurrounding ſhade our navy brought;
For gloomy night deſcended on the main,
Nor glimmer'd Phoebe in th' ethereal plain:

ỳ. 144. *Bleating goat.*] It is exactly thus in the original, ver. 124. μηκάδας, *balantes*; which Pullux, lib. 5. obſerves not to be the proper term for the voice of goats, which is ερεμαγμάς.

ỳ 165. *Hither ſome fav'ring god*——] This circumſtance is inſerted with great judgment, Ulyſſes otherwiſe might have landed in Sicily, and fallen into the hands of the Cyclopeans, and conſequently been loſt inevitably: he therefore piouſly aſcribes his ſafety, by being driven upon this deſolate iſland, to the guidance of the gods; he uſes it as a retreat, leaves his navy there, and paſſes

But

But all unſeen the clouded iſland lay,
And all unſeen the ſurge and rowling ſea,
'Till ſafe we anchor'd in the ſhelter'd bay:
Our ſails we gather'd, caſt our cables o'er,
And ſlept ſecure along the ſandy ſhore.
Soon as again the roſy morning ſhone,
Reveal'd the landſcape and the ſcene unknown,
With wonder ſeiz'd we view the pleaſing ground,
And walk delighted, and expatiate round.
Rows'd by the woodland nymphs, at early dawn,
The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn:

over into Sicily in one ſingle veſſel, undiſcovered by theſe gigantic ſavages; this reconciles the relation to probability, and renders his eſcape practicable. Euſtathius.

ver. 178. *The woodland nymphs.*] This paſſage is not without obſcurity, and it is not eaſy to underſtand what is meant by the daughters of Jupiter. Euſtathius tells us, the poet ſpeaks allegorically, and that he means to ſpecify the plants and herbs of the field. Jupiter denotes the air, not only in Homer, but in the Latin poets. Thus Virgil.

Tum pater omnipotens foecundis imbribus Æther
Conjugis in gremium laetae deſcendit———

and conſequently the herbs and plants, being nouriſhed by the mild air and fruitful rains, may be ſaid to be the daughters of Jupiter, or offspring of the ſkies; and theſe goats and beaſts of the field, being fed by theſe plants and herbs, may be ſaid to be awakened by the daughters of Jupiter, that is, they awake to feed upon the herbage early in the morning. Κοῦραι Διὸς, ἀλληγορικῶς αἱ τῶν φυτῶν αὐξητικαὶ δυνάμεις, ἃς ὁ Ζεὺς ποιεῖ. Thus Homer makes deities of the

In haſte our fellows to the ſhips repair,
For arms and weapons of the ſylvan war;
Strait in three ſquadrons all our crew we part,
And bend the bow, or wing the miſſile dart;
The bounteous gods afford a copious prey,
And nine fat goats each veſſel bears away:
The royal bark had ten. Our ſhips complete
We thus ſupply'd, (for twelve were all the fleet.)
Here, till the ſetting ſun rowl'd down the light,
We ſat indulging in the genial rite:
Nor wines were wanting; thoſe from ample jars
We drained, the prize of our Ciconian wars.
The land of Cyclops lay in proſpect near;
The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
And from their mountains riſing ſmokes appear.

vegetative faculties and virtues of the field. I fear ſuch boldneſſes would not be allowed in modern poetry.

It muſt be confeſſed that this interpretation is very refined: but I am ſure it will be a more natural explication to take theſe for the real mountain nymphs (Oreades) as they are in many places of the Odyſſey; the very expreſſion is found in the ſixth book,

---------Νύμφαι κοῦραι Διὸς-------

and there ſignifies the nymphs attending upon Diana in her ſports: immediately after Ulyſſes, being awakened by a ſudden noiſe, miſtakes Nauſicaa and her damſels for nymphs of the mountains or floods; and this conjecture will not be without probability, if we remember that theſe nymphs were huntreſſes, as is evident from their relation to Diana. Why then may not the other expreſſion be meant of the nymphs that are fabled to inhabit the mountains?

Now ſunk the ſun, and darkneſs cover'd o'er
The face of things: along the ſea-beat ſhore
Satiate we ſlept: But when the ſacred dawn
Ariſing glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
I call'd my fellows, and theſe words addreſt.
My dear aſſociates, here indulge your reſt:
While, with my ſingle ſhip, advent'rous I
Go forth, the manners of yon men to try;
Whether a race unjuſt, of barb'rous might,
Rude, and unconſcious of a ſtranger's right;
Or ſuch who harbour pity in their breaſt,
Revere the gods, and ſuccour the diſtreſt?
This ſaid, I climb'd my veſſel's lofty ſide;
My train obey'd me and the ſhip unty'd.

ỳ. 201. *While, with my ſingle ſhip advent'rous I.*] The reader may be pleaſed to obſerve, that the poet has here given the reins to his fancy, and run out into a luxuriant deſcription of Ægnſa and Sicily: he refreſhes the mind of the reader with a pleaſing and beautiful ſcene, before he enters upon a ſtory of ſo much horror, as this of the Cyclops.

A very ſufficient reaſon may be aſſigned, why Ulyſſes here goes in perſon to ſearch this land: he dares not, as Euſtathius remarks, truſt his companions; their diſobedience among the Ciconians, and their unworthy conduct among the Lotophagi, have convinced him that no confidence is to be repoſed in them: this ſeems probable, and upon this probability Homer proceeds to bring about the puniſhment of Polypheme, which the wiſdom of Ulyſſes effects, and it is an action of importance, and conſequently ought to be performed by the hero of the poem.

In order ſeated on their banks, they ſweep
Neptune's ſmooth face, and cleave the yielding deep.
When to the neareſt verge of land we drew,
Faſt by the ſea a lonely cave we view,
High, and with dark'ning lawrels cover'd o'er;
Where ſheep and goats lay ſlumb'ring round the ſhore.
Near this, a fence of marble from the rock,
Brown with o'er-arching pine, and ſpreading oak.
A giant-ſhepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the reſt, and ſolitary reigns,
In ſhelter thick of horrid ſhade reclin'd;
And gloomy miſchiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in ſtature, or in face;

℣. 221. *A form enormous! far unlike the race of human birth.*] Goropius Becanus, an Antwerpian, has wrote a large diſcourſe to prove, that there never were any ſuch men as giants; contrary to the teſtimony both of prophane and ſacred hiſtory: thus Moſes ſpeaks of the Rephaims of Aſteroth, the Zamzummins of Ham, the Emims of Moab, and Anakims of Hebron. See Deut. ii. ver. 20. 'That alſo was called a land of gi-'ants, it was a great people, and tall as the Zamzum-'mims'. Thus Goliah muſt be allowed to be a giant, for he was ſix cubits and a ſpan, that is, nine feet and a ſpan in height; his coat of mail weighed five thouſand ſhekels of braſs, about one hundred and fifty pounds: (but I confeſs others underſtand the leſſer ſhekel) the head of his ſpear alone weighed ſix hundred ſhekels of iron, that is, about eighteen or nineteen pounds. We find the like relations in prophane hiſtory: Plutarch in his life of Theſeus ſays, that age was productive of

As ſome lone mountain's monſtrous growth he ſtood,
Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.
I left my veſſel at the point of land,
And cloſe to guard it, gave our crew command:
With only twelve, the boldeſt and the beſt,
I ſeek th' adventure, and forſake the reſt.

men of prodigious ſtature, giants. Thus Diodorus Siculus; *Ægyptii ſcribunt, Iſidis aetate, fuiſſe vaſto corpore homines, quos Graeci dixere Gigantes.* Herodotus affirms that the body of Oreſtes was dug up, and appeared to be ſeven cubits long; but Aulus Gellius believes this to be an error. Joſephus writes, l. 18. cap. 6. that Vitellius ſent a Jew named Eleazar, ſeven cubits in height, as a preſent from Artabanus king of the Parthians, to Tiberius Caeſar; this man was ten feet and a half high. Pliny 7. 16. ſpeaks of a man that was nine feet nine inches high; and in another place, 6. 30. *Sybortas, gentem Æthiopum Nomadum, octona cubita longitudine excedere.*

Thus it is evident, that there have been men of very extraordinary ſtature in former ages. Though perhaps ſuch inſtances were not frequent in any age or any nation. So that Homer only amplifies, not invents; and as there was really a people called Cyclopeans, ſo they might be men of great ſtature, or giants.

It may ſeem ſtrange that in all ancient ſtories the firſt planters of moſt nations are recorded to be giants; I ſcarce can perſuade myſelf but ſuch accounts are generally fabulous; and hope to be pardoned for a conjecture which may give a ſeeming reaſon how ſuch ſtories came to prevail. The Greeks were a people of very great antiquity; they made many expeditions, as appears from Jaſon, etc. and ſent out frequent colonies: now the head of every colony was called Ἄναξ, and theſe adventurers being perſons of great figure in ſtory, were re-

Then took a goatſkin fill'd with precious wine,
The gift of Maron, of Evantheus' line,
(The prieſt of Phoebus at th' Iſmarian ſhrine)
In ſacred ſhade his honour'd manſion ſtood
Amidſt Apollo's conſecrated wood;
Him, and his houſe, heav'n mov'd my mind to ſave,
And coſtly preſents in return he gave;
Seven golden talents to perfection wrought,
A ſilver bowl that held a copious draught,

corded as men of war, of might and renown, through the old world: it is therefore not impoſſible but the Hebrews might form their word Anac, from the Greek ἄναξ, and uſe it to denote perſons of uncommon might and abilities. Theſe they called Anac, and ſons of Anac; and afterwards in a leſs proper ſenſe uſed it to ſignify men of uncommon ſtature, or giants. So that in this ſenſe, all nations may be ſaid to be originally peopled by a ſon of Anac, or a giant. But this is ſubmitted as a conjecture to the reader's judgment.

℣. 229. *Precious wine, the gift of Maron.*] Such digreſſions as theſe are very frequent in Homer, but I am far from thinking them always beauties: it is true, they give variety to poetry; but whether that be an equivalent for calling off the attention of the reader from the more important action, and diverting it with ſmall incidents, is what I much queſtion. It is not indeed impoſſible but this Maron might have been the friend of Homer, and this praiſe of him will then be a monument of his grateful diſpoſition; and in this view a beauty. It muſt be confeſſed that Ulyſſes makes uſe of this wine to a very good effect, viz. to bring about the deſtruction of Polypheme, and his own deliverance; and therefore it was neceſſary to ſet it off very particularly; but this might have been done in fewer lines. As it now ſtands it is a little epiſode; our expectations are raiſed

And twelve large veſſels of unmingled wine,
Melliſluous, undecaying, and divine!
Which now ſome ages from his race conceal'd,
The hoary ſire in gratitude reveal'd,
Such was the wine: to quench whoſe fervent ſteam,
Scarce twenty meaſures from the living ſtream
To cool one cup ſuffic'd: the goblet crown'd
Breath'd aromatic fragrancies around.
Of this an ample vaſe we heav'd aboard,
And brought another with proviſions ſtor'd.
My ſoul foreboded I ſhould find the bow'r
Of ſome fell monſter, fierce with barb'rous pow'r,
Some ruſtic wretch, who liv'd in heav'ns deſpight,
Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.

to learn the event of ſo uncommon an adventure, when all of a ſudden Homer breaks the ſtory, and gives us a hiſtory of Maron. But I diſtruſt my judgment much rather than Homer's.

℣. 243. *Scarce twenty meaſures from the living ſtream*
To cool one cup ſuffic'd——]

There is no wine of ſo ſtrong a body as to bear ſuch a diſproportionable quantity; But Homer amplifies the ſtrength of it to prepare the reader for its ſurprizing effects immediately upon Polypheme.

℣. 250. *Some ruſtic wretch, who liv'd*, etc.] This whole paſſage muſt be conſidered as told by a perſon long after the adventure was paſt, otherwiſe how ſhould Ulyſſes know that this cave was the habitation of a ſavage monſter before he had ſeen him? and when he tells us that himſelf and twelve companions went to ſearch, what people were inhabitants of this iſland; Euſtathius and Dacier ſeem both to have overlooked this obſervation; for in a following note ſhe condemns Ulyſſes for not fly-

The cave we found, but vacant all within
(His flock the giant tended on the green)
But round the grott we gaze, and all we view
In order rang'd, our admiration drew:
The bending ſhelves with loads of cheeſes preſt,
The folded flocks each ſep'rate from the reſt,
(The larger here, and there the leſſer lambs,
The new fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
The kid diſtinguiſh'd from the lambkin lies:)
The cavern echoes with reſponſive cries.
Capacious chargers all around were lay'd,
Full pails, and veſſels of the milking trade.
With freſh proviſion hence our fleet to ſtore
My friends adviſe me, and to quit the ſhore;
Or drive a flock of ſheep and goats away,
Conſult our ſafety, and put off to ſea.
Their wholeſome counſel raſhly I declin'd,
Curious to view the man of monſtrous kind,
And try what ſocial rites a ſavage lends:
Dire rites alas! and fatal to my friends!
Then firſt a fire we kindle, and prepare
For his return with ſacrifice and prayer.

ing from the iſland, as he was adviſed by his companions. But if, on the other hand, we ſuppoſe that Ulyſſes was under apprehenſions from the ſavageneſs of the place, of finding a ſavage race of people, it will be natural enough that his mind ſhould forebode as much; and it appears from other paſſages, that this ſort of inſtinctive preſage was a favourite opinion of Homer's.

The loaden ſhelves afford us full repaſt;
We ſit expecting. Lo! he comes at laſt.
Near half a foreſt on his back he bore,
And caſt the pond'rous burden at the door.
It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
And ſought the deep receſſes of the den.
Now driv'n before him, thro' the arching rock,
Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd flock:
Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind,
(The males were penn'd in outward courts behind)
Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate.
(Scarce twenty four-wheel'd cars, compact and ſtrong,
The maſſy load could bear, or roll along)
He next betakes him to his evening cares,
And ſitting down, to milk his flocks prepares;
Of half their udders eaſes firſt the dams,
Then to the mother's teat ſubmits the lambs.
Half the white ſtream to hard'ning cheeſe he preſt,
And high in wicker baſkets heap'd: the reſt
Reſerv'd in bowls, ſupply'd his nightly feaſt.
His labour done, he fir'd the pyle that gave
A ſudden blaze, and lighted all the cave.
We ſtand diſcover'd by the riſing fires;
Aſkance the giant glares, and thus inquires.
What are ye, gueſts; on what adventure, ſay,
Thus far ye wander thro' the wat'ry way?
Pirates perhaps, who ſeek thro' ſeas unknown
The lives of others, and expoſe your own?

His voice like thunder thro' the cavern ſounds:
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
Appall'd at ſight of more than mortal man!
At length, with heart recover'd, I began.
From Troy's fam'd fields, ſad wand'rers o'er the main,
Behold the relicks of the Grecian train!
Thro' various ſeas by various perils toſt,
And forc'd by ſtorms, unwilling, on your coaſt;
Far from our deſtin'd courſe, and native land,
Such was our fate, and ſuch high Jove's command!
Nor what we are befits us to diſclaim,
Atrides' friends, (in arms a mighty name)
Who taught proud Troy and all her ſons to bow:
Victors of late, but humble ſuppliants now!
Low at thy knee thy ſuccour we implore;
Reſpect us, human, and relieve us, poor.
At leaſt ſome hoſpitable gift beſtow;
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe:

℣. 307. *From Troy's fam'd fields*, etc.] This ſpeech is very well adapted to make an impreſſion upon Polypheme. Ulyſſes applies to move either his fears or his compaſſion; he tells him he is an unfortunate perſon, and comes as a ſuppliant; and if this prevails nothing, he adds, he is a ſubject of the great Agamemnon, who had lately deſtroyed a mighty kingdom: which is ſpoken to make him afraid to offer violence to the ſubject of a king who had power to revenge any injuries offered his people. To intimidate him further, he concludes with the mention of the gods, and in particular of Jupiter, as avengers of any breach of the laws of hoſpitality: theſe are arguments well choſen to move any perſon, but an inhuman Polypheme. Euſtathius.

'Tis what the gods require: Thoſe gods revere,
The poor and ſtranger are their conſtant care:
To Jove their cauſe, and their revenge belongs,
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.
Fools that ye are! (The ſavage thus replies,
His inward fury blazing at his eyes)
Or ſtrangers, diſtant far from our abodes,
To bid me rev'rence or regard the gods.
Know then we Cyclops are, a race above
Thoſe air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove:
And learn, our power proceeds with thee and thine,
Not as he wills, but as ourſelves incline.
But anſwer, the good ſhip that brought ye o'er,
Where lies ſhe anchor'd? near or off the ſhore?
Thus he. His meditated fraud I find,
(Vers'd in the turns of various humankind)
And cautious, thus. Againſt a dreadful rock,
Faſt by your ſhore the gallant veſſel broke,
Scarce with theſe few I ſcap'd; of all my train,
With angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main;
The ſcatter'd wreck the winds blew back again.
He anſwer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band;
And daſh'd like dogs againſt the ſtony floor:
The pavement ſwims with brains and mingled gore.

℣. 344. *And daſh'd like dogs———*
The pavement ſwims, etc.]

There is a great beauty in the verſification in the original.

Torn limb from limb, he ſpeads his horrid feaſt,
And fierce devours it like a mountain beaſt:
He ſucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
Nor entrails, fleſh, nor ſolid bone remains.
We ſee the death from which we cannot move,
And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
A milky deluge next the giant ſwill'd;
Then ſtretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
Lay ſenſeleſs, and ſupine, amidſt the flock.
To ſeize the time, and with a ſudden wound
To fix the ſlumb'ring monſter to the ground,

Σὺν δὲ δύω μάρψας, ὥστε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ
Κόπτ'. ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν,

Dionyſius Halicarn. takes notice of it, in his diſſertation upon placing words: when the companions of Ulyſſes, ſays that author, are daſhed againſt the rock, to expreſs the horror of the action, Homer dwells upon the moſt inharmonious harſh letters and ſyllables: he no where uſes any ſoftneſs, or any run of verſes to pleaſe the ear. Scaliger injudiciouſly condemns this deſcription; 'Homer, ſays he, 'makes uſe of the moſt offen-'ſive and loathſome expreſſions, more fit for a butcher's 'ſhambles than the majeſty of heroic poetry.' Macrobius, lib. 5. cap. 13. of his Saturnalia, commends theſe lines of Homer, and even prefers them before the ſame deſcription in Virgil; his words are, *Narrationem facti nudam Maro poſuit, Homerus πάθος miſcuit, et dolore narrandi invidiam crudelitatis aequavit.* And indeed he muſt be a ſtrange critic that expects ſoft verſes upon a horrible occaſion, whereas the verſes ought, if poſſible, to repreſent the thought they are intended to convey; and every perſon's ear will inform him that Homer has not in this paſſage executed this rule unſucceſsfully.

My

My ſoul impels me; and in act I ſtand
To draw the ſword; but wiſdom held my hand.
A deed ſo raſh had finiſh'd all our fate,
No mortal forces from the lofty gate
Could roll the rock. In hopeleſs grief we lay,
And ſigh, expecting the return of day.
Now did the roſy finger'd morn ariſe,
And ſhed her ſacred light along the ſkies.
He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
And to the mother's teat ſubmits the lambs.
The taſk thus finiſh'd of his morning hours,
Two more he ſnatches, murders, and devours.
Then pleas'd and whiſtling, drives his flock before;
Removes the rocky mountain from the door,
And ſhuts again; with equal eaſe diſpos'd,
As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.
His giant voice the echoing region fills:
His flocks, obedient, ſpread o'er all the hills.

Thus left behind, e'en in the laſt deſpair
I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my prayer.
Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breaſt;
But this of many counſels ſeem'd the beſt:
The monſter's club within the cave I ſpy'd,
A tree of ſtatelieſt growth, and yet undry'd,
Green from the wood; of height and bulk ſo vaſt,
The largeſt ſhip might claim it for a maſt.
This ſhorten'd of its top, I gave my train
A fathom's length, to ſhape it and to plain;

The narrow'r end I ſharpen'd to a ſpire;
Whoſe point we harden'd with the force of fire,
And hid it in the duſt that ſtrow'd the cave.
Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
Propos'd, who firſt the vent'rous deed ſhould try;
In the broad orbit of his monſtrous eye
To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
When ſlumber next ſhould tame the man of blood.
Juſt as I wiſh'd, the lots were caſt on four:
Myſelf the fifth. We ſtand and wait the hour.
He comes with evening: all his fleecy flock
Before him march, and pour into the rock:
Not one, or male or female ſtay'd behind;
(So fortune chanc'd, or ſo ſome god deſign'd)

ℽ. 394. *The lots were caſt*——] Ulyſſes bids his friends to caſt lots; this is done to ſhew that he would not voluntarily expoſe them to ſo imminent danger. If he had made the choice himſelf, they whom he had choſen might have thought he had given them up to deſtruction, and they whom he had rejected might have judged it a ſtain upon them as a want of merit, and ſo have complained of injuſtice; but by this method he avoids theſe inconveniencies.

ℽ. 399. *Or ſo ſome god deſign'd.*] Ulyſſes aſcribes it to the influence of the gods that Polypheme drives the whole flock into his den, and does not ſeparate the females from the males as he had before done; for by this accident Ulyſſes makes his eſcape, as appears from the following part of the ſtory. Homer here uſes the word ἴσσαμενος, to ſhew the ſuſpicion which Polypheme might entertain that Ulyſſes had other companions abroad who might plunder his flocks; and this gives another reaſon why he drove them all into his cave, namely for the greater ſecurity.

Then heaving high the ſtone's unwieldly weight,
He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
Firſt down he ſits, to milk the woolly dams,
And then permits their udder to the lambs.
Next ſeiz'd two wretches more, and headlong caſt,
Brain'd on the rock; his ſecond dire repaſt.
I then approach'd him reeking with their gore,
And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er:
Cyclop! ſince human fleſh has been thy feaſt,
Now drain this goblet, potent to digeſt:
Know hence what treaſures in our ſhip we loſt,
And what rich liquors other climates boaſt.
We to thy ſhore the precious freighr ſhall bear
If home thou ſend us, and vouchſafe to ſpare.
But oh! thus furious, thirſting thus for gore,
The ſons of men ſhall ne'er approach thy ſhore,
And never ſhalt thou taſte this nectar more.
He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
Delighted ſwill'd the large luxurious draught.
More! give me more, he cry'd: the boon be thine,
Whoe'er thou art that bear'ſt celeſtial wine!
Declare thy name; not mortal is this juice,
Such as th' unbleſt Cyclopean climes produce,
(Tho' ſure our vine the largeſt cluſter yields,
And Jove's ſcorn'd thunder ſerves to drench our fields)
But this deſcended from the bleſt abodes,
A rill of Nectar, ſtreaming from the gods.
He ſaid, and greedy graſp'd the heady bowl,
Thrice drain'd and pour'd the deluge on his ſoul.

His ſenſe lay cover'd with the dozy fume;
While thus my fraudful ſpeech I reaſſume.
Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,
And plead my title: No-man is my name.

ỳ. 432.——*No-man is my name.*] I will not trouble the reader with a long account of ϖ̃τις to be found in Euſtathius, who ſeems delighted with this piece of pleaſantry; nor with what Dacier obſerves, who declares ſhe approves of it extremely, and calls it a very happy imagination. If it were modeſty in me to diſſent from Homer, and two commentators, I would own my opinion of it, and acknowlege the whole to be nothing but a colluſion of words, and fitter to have place in a farce or comedy, than in epic poetry. Lucian has thus uſed it, and applied it to raiſe laughter in one of his facetious dialogues. The whole wit or jeſt lies in the ambiguity of ϖ̃τις, which Ulyſſes impoſes upon Polypheme as his own name, which in reality ſignifies *No Man*. I doubt not but Homer was well pleaſed with it, for afterwards he plays upon the word, and calls Ulyſſes ὀτιδ᾽ανὸς ϖ̃τις. But the faults of Homer have a kind of veneration, perhaps like old age, from their antiquity.

Euripides has tranſlated this whole paſſage in his tragedy, called the Cyclops. The chorus begins thus, *Why doſt thou thus cry out*, Cyclops? Cyc. *I am undone.* Cho. *You ſeem to be in a woful condition.* Cyc. *I am utterly miſerable.* Cho. *You have been drunk and fall'n into the embers.* Cyc. No-man *has undone me.* Cho. *Well then no* No-man *has injur'd you.* Cyc. No-man *has blinded me.* Cho. *Then you are not blind.*

This appears to me more fit for the two Soſia's in Plautus, than for tragic or epic poetry; and I fancy an author who ſhould introduce ſuch a ſport of words upon the ſtage, even in the comedy of our days, would meet with ſmall applauſe.

By that diſtinguiſh'd from my tender years,
'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.
The giant then. Our promis'd grace receive,
The hoſpitable boon we mean to give:
When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,
No-man ſhall be the laſt I ſhall devour.
He ſaid: then nodding with the fumes of wine
Dropt his huge head, and ſnoring lay ſupine.
His neck obliquely o'er his ſhoulder hung,
Preſt with the weight of ſleep that tames the ſtrong!
There belcht the mingled ſteams of wine and blood,
And human fleſh, his indigeſted food.
Sudden I ſtir the embers, and inſpire
With animating breath the ſeeds of fire;
Each drooping ſpirit with bold words repair,
And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
The ſtake now glow'd beneath the burning bed
(Green as it was) and ſparkled fiery red.
Then forth the vengeful inſtrument I bring;
With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
Urg'd by ſome preſent god, they ſwift let fall
The pointed torment on his viſual ball.
Myſelf above them from a riſing ground
Guide the ſharp ſtake, and twirl it round and round.
As when a ſhipwright ſtands his workmen o'er,
Who plye the wimble, ſome huge beam to bore;

℣. 458. *Who plye the wimble.*] This and the following compariſon are drawn from low life, but ennobled with a dignity of expreſſion. Inſtead of ἕλονῆες, Ari-

Urg'd on all hands it nimbly ſpins about,
The grain deep piercing till it ſcoops it out:
In his broad eye ſo whirls the fiery wood;
From the pierc'd pupil ſpouts the boiling blood;
Sing'd are his brows; the ſcorching lids grow black;
The gelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
And as when arm'rers temper in the ford
The keen-edg'd pole-axe, or the ſhining ſword,
The red-hot metal hiſſes in the lake,
Thus in his eyeball hiſs'd the plunging ſtake.
He ſends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
Thro' all their inmoſt-winding caves reſound.
Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand
He tore, and daſh'd on earth the goary brand:

ſtarchus reads ἔχοντες, as Euſtathius informs us. The ſimilitudes are natural and lively, we are made ſpectators of what they repreſent. Sophocles has imitated this, in the tragedy where OEdipus tears out his own eyes! and Euripides has transferred this whole adventure into his Cyclops with very little alteration, and in particular the former compariſon. But to inſtance in all that Euripides has imitated, would be to tranſcribe a great part of that tragedy. In ſhort, this epiſode in general is very noble; but if the interlude about Outis be at all allowable in ſo grave and majeſtic a poem, it is only allowable becauſe it is here related before a light and injudicious aſſembly, I mean the Phaeacians, to whom any thing more great or ſerious would have been leſs pleaſing; ſo that the poet writes to his audience. I wonder this has never been offered in defence of this low entertainment.

Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair,
From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air.
All haſte aſſembled, at his well-known roar,
Enquire the cauſe, and croud the cavern door.

What hurts thee, Polypheme? what ſtrange affright
Thus breaks our ſlumbers, and diſturbs the night?
Does any mortal in th' unguarded hour
Of ſleep, oppreſs thee, or by fraud or pow'r?
Of thieves inſidious the fair flock ſurprize?
Thus they: the Cyclop from his den replies.

Friends, No-man kills; No-man in the hour
Of ſleep, oppreſſes me with fraudful pow'r.
'If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine
'Inflict diſeaſe, it fits thee to reſign:
'To Jove or to thy father Neptune pray,
The brethren cry'd, and inſtant ſtrode away.

Joy touch'd my ſecret ſoul, and conſcious heart,
Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.
Mean-time the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and ſearches round and round:
At laſt, the ſtone removing from the gate,
With hands extended in the midſt he ſate;

℣. 495. ——*The ſtone removing from the gate.*] This conduct of Polypheme may ſeem very abſurd, and it looks to be improbable that he ſhould not call the other giants to aſſiſt him, in the detection of the perſons who had taken his ſight from him; eſpecially when it was

And ſearch'd each paſſing ſheep, and felt it o'er
Secure to ſeize us ere we reach'd the door.
(Such as his ſhallow wit, he deem'd was mine)
But ſecret I revolv'd the deep deſign:
'Twas for our lives my lab'ring boſom wrought;
Each ſcheme I turn'd, and ſharpen'd every thought;
This way and that, I caſt to ſave my friends,
'Till one reſolve my varying counſel ends.

Strong were the rams, with native purple fair,
Well fed, and largeſt of the fleecy care.
Theſe three and three, with oſier bands we ty'd,
(The twining bands the Cyclop's bed ſupply'd)
The midmoſt bore a man; the outward two
Secur'd each ſide: So bound we all the crew.
One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;
In his deep fleece my graſping hands I lock,

now day-light, and they at hand. Euſtathius was aware of the objection, and imputes it to his folly and dullneſs. Tully, 5. Tuſcul. gives us the ſame character of Polypheme; and becauſe it vindicates Homer for introducing a ſpeech of Polypheme to his ram; I will beg leave to tranſcribe it. *Tireſiam, quem ſapientem fingunt poetae, nunquam inducunt deplorantem caecitatem ſuam; at vero Polyphemum Homerus, cum immanem furumque finxiſſet, cum ariete etiam colloquentem facit ejuſque laudare fortunas, quod qua vellet, ingredi poſſet, et quae vellet attingere: recte hic equidem; nihilo enim erat ipſe Cyclops quam aries ille prudentior.* This is a full defence of Homer; but Tully has miſtaken the words of Polypheme to the ram, for there is no reſemblance to *ejus laudare fortunas, quod qua vellet ingredi poſſet, etc.* I ſuppoſe Tully quoted by memory.

℣. 511. *One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock.*]

And faſt beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
There cling implicite, and confide in Jove.
When roſy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
He drove to paſture all the luſty males:

This paſſage has been miſunderſtood, to imply that Ulyſſes took more care of himſelf than of his companions, in chuſing the largeſt ram for his own convenience; an imputation unworthy of the character of an hero. But there is no ground for it, he takes more care of his friends than of his own perſon, for he allots them three ſheep, and lets them eſcape before him. Beſides, this conduct was neceſſary; for all his friends were bound, and, by chuſing this ram, he keeps himſelf at liberty to unbind the reſt after their eſcape. Neither was there any other method practicable; for, he being the laſt, there was no perſon to bind him. Euſtathius.

The care Ulyſſes takes of his companions agrees with the character of Horace,

Dum ſibi, dum ſociis reditum parat, aſpera multa
Pertulit———

But it may ſeem improbable that a ram ſhould be able to carry ſo great a burden as Ulyſſes; the generation of ſheep, as well as men, may appear to have decreaſed ſince the days of Ulyſſes. Homer himſelf ſeems to have guarded againſt this objection; he deſcribes theſe ſheep as εὐτρεφέες, καλοὶ, μεγάλοι; the ram is ſpoken of as μακρὰ βιβάς, (an expreſſion applied to Ajax, as Euſtathius obſerves, in the Iliad.) Hiſtory informs us of ſheep of a very large ſize in other countries, and a poet is at liberty to chuſe the largeſt, if by that method he gives his ſtory a greater appearance of probability.

The ewes ſtill folded, with diſtended thighs
Unmilk'd, lay bleating in diſtreſsful cries.
But heedleſs of thoſe cares, with anguiſh ſtung,
He felt their fleeces as they paſs'd along.
(Fool that he was) and let them ſafely go,
All unſuſpecting of their freight below.

The maſter-ram at laſt approach'd the gate,
Charg'd with his wool, and with Ulyſſes' fate.
Him while he paſt the monſter blind beſpoke:
What makes my lamb the lag of all the flock?
Firſt thou wert wont to crop the flow'ry mead,
Firſt to the field and river's bank to lead,
And firſt with ſtately ſtep at evening hour
Thy fleecy fellows uſher to their bow'r.
Now far the laſt, with penſive pace and ſlow
Thou mov'ſt, as conſcious of thy maſter's woe!
Seeſt thou theſe lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of No-man and his wicked train)
Oh! didſt thou feel for thy afflicted lord,
And wou'd but fate the pow'r of ſpeech afford;
Soon might'ſt thou tell me, where in ſecret here
The daſtard lurks, all trembling with his fear.

℣. 517. *The ewes ſtill folded,*
Unmilk'd, lay bleating.]

This particularity may ſeem of no importance, and conſequently unneceſſary: but it is in poetry as in painting; they both with very good effect uſe circumſtances that are not abſolutely neceſſary to the ſubject, but only appendages and embelliſhments. This particular has that effect, it repreſents nature, and therefore gives an air of truth and probability to the ſtory.

Swung round and round, and daſh'd from rock to rock,
His batter'd brains ſhou'd on the pavement ſmoke.
No eaſe, no pleaſure my ſad heart receives,
While ſuch a monſter as vile No-man lives.
The giant ſpoke, and thro' the hollow rock
Diſmiſs'd the ram, the father of the flock.
No ſooner freed, and thro' th' encloſure paſt,
Firſt I releaſe myſelf, my fellows laſt:
Fat ſheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our veſſel on the winding ſhore.
With joy the ſailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd.
Big tears of tranſport ſtand in ev'ry eye:
I check their fondneſs, and command to fly.
Aboard in haſte they heave the wealthy ſheep,
And ſnatch their oars, and ruſh into the deep,
Now off at ſea, and from the ſhallows clear,
As far as human voice cou'd reach the ear;
With taunts the diſtant giant I accoſt,
Hear me, oh Cyclop! hear, ungracious hoſt!
'Twas on no coward, no ignoble ſlave,
Thou meditat'ſt thy meal in yonder cave;
But one, the vengeance fated from above
Doom'd to inflict; the inſtrument of Jove.
Thy barb'rous breach of hoſpitable bands,
The god, the god revenges by my hands.
Theſe words the Cyclop's burning rage provoke:
From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock;

High o'er the billows flew the maſſy load,
And near the ſhip came thund'ring on the flood.
It almoſt bruſh'd the helm, and fell before:
The whole ſea ſhook, and refluent beat the ſhore.

ver. 569. *It almoſt bruſh'd the helm*, etc.] The antients, remarks Euſtathius, placed an obeliſk and aſteriſm before this verſe; the former, to note that they thought it miſplaced; the latter, to ſhew that they looked upon it as a beauty. Apparently it is not agreeable to the deſcription; for how is it poſſible that this huge rock falling before the veſſel ſhould endanger the rudder, which is in the ſtern? Can a ſhip ſail with the ſtern foremoſt? Some antient critics, to take away the contradiction, have aſſerted that Ulyſſes turned his ſhip to ſpeak to Polypheme; but this is abſurd, for why could not Ulyſſes ſpeak from the ſtern as well as from the prow? It therefore ſeems that the verſe ought to be entirely omitted, as undoubtedly it may without any chaſm in the author. We find it inſerted a little lower, and there it correſponds with the deſcription, and ſtands with propriety.

But if we ſuppoſe that the ſhip of Ulyſſes lay at ſuch a diſtance from the cave of Polypheme, as to make it neceſſary to bring it nearer, to be heard diſtinctly; then indeed we may ſolve the difficulty, and let the verſe ſtand: for if we ſuppoſe Ulyſſes approaching toward Polypheme, then the rock may be ſaid to be thrown before the veſſel, that is, beyond it, and endanger the rudder, and this bears ſome appearance of probability.

This paſſage brings to my memory a deſcription of Polypheme in Apollonius. Argonaut. 1.

Κεῖνος ἀνὴρ καὶ πόντῳ ἐπὶ γλαυκοῖο θέεσκεν
Οἴδμαλος, ὐδὲ θοὺς βάπτεν πόδας ἀλλ' ὅσον ἄκροις
Ἴχνεσι τεῦγόμενος διερῇ περόρητο κελεύθῳ.

If Polypheme had really this quality of running upon the waves, he might have deſtroyed Ulyſſes without throw-

The

The ſtrong concuſſion on the heaving tyde
Roll'd back the veſſel to the iſland's ſide:
Again I ſhov'd her off; our fate to fly,
Each nerve we ſtretch, and ev'ry oar we ply.
Juſt 'ſcap'd impending death, when now again
We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,
Once more I raiſe my voice; my friends afraid
With mild entreaties my deſign diſſuade.
What boots the god-leſs giant to provoke?
Whoſe arm may ſink us at a ſingle ſtroke.
Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
Old Ocean ſhook, and back his ſurges flew.
The ſounding voice directs his aim again;
The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'ſcap'd in vain.
But I, of mind elate, and ſcorning fear,
Thus with new taunts inſult the monſter's ear.
Cyclop! if any, pitying thy diſgrace,
Aſk who diſfigur'd thus that eye-leſs face?

ing this mountain; but Apollonius is undoubtedly guilty of an abſurdity, and one might rather believe that he would ſink the earth at every ſtep, than run upon the waters with ſuch lightneſs as not to wet his feet. Virgil has more judiciouſly applied thoſe lines to Camilla in his Æneis.

——*Mare per medium fluctu ſuſpenſa tumenti*
Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas.

The poet expreſſes the ſwiftneſs of Camilla in the nimble flow of the verſe, which conſiſts almoſt entirely of dactyles, and runs off with the utmoſt rapidity, like the laſt of thoſe quoted from Apollonius.

Say 'twas Ulyſſes; 'twas his deed, declare,
Laertes' ſon, of Ithaca the fair;
Ulyſſes, far in fighting fields renown'd,
Before whoſe arm Troy tumbled to the ground.

Th' aſtoniſh'd ſavage with a roar replies:
Oh heav'ns! oh faith of antient prophecies!
This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold,
(The mighty ſeer who on theſe hills grew old;

℣. 595. *This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold.*] This incident ſufficiently ſhews the uſe of that diſſimulation which enters into the character of Ulyſſes: if he had diſcovered his name, the Cyclops had deſtroy'd him as his moſt dangerous enemy. Plutarch, in his diſcourſe upon garrulity, commends the fidelity of the companions of Ulyſſes, who, when they were dragged by this giant and daſhed againſt the rock, confeſſed not a word concerning their lord, and ſcorned to purchaſe their lives at the expence of their honeſty. Ulyſſes himſelf, adds he, was the moſt eloquent and moſt ſilent of men; he knew that a word ſpoken never wrought ſo much good, as a word concealed; men teach us to ſpeak, but the gods teach us ſilence; for ſilence is the firſt thing that is taught us at our initiation into ſacred myſteries; and we find theſe companions had profited under ſo great a maſter in ſilence as Ulyſſes.

Ovid relates this prophecy in the ſtory of Polypheme and Galatea.

Telemus interea Siculum delatus in aequor,
Telemus Eurymides, quem nulla fefellerat ales,
Terribilem Polyphemon adit; lumenque quod unum
Fronte geris media, rapiet tibi, dixit, Ulyſſes:
Riſit, et, o vatum ſtolidiſſime, falleris, inquit,
Altera jam rapuit: ———

Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air)
Long ſince he menac'd, ſuch was Fate's command;
And nam'd Ulyſſes as the deſtin'd hand.
I deem'd ſome god-like giant to behold,
Or lofty hero, haughty, brave, and bold;
Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean deſign,
Who not by ſtrength ſubdu'd me, but by wine.
But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray
Great Neptune's bleſſing on the wat'ry way:
For his I am, and I the lineage own;
Th' immortal father no leſs boaſts the ſon.
His pow'r can heal me, and re-light my eye;
And only his, of all the gods on high.
Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
From that vaſt bulk diſlodge thy bloody mind,

ỳ. 603. *Not this weak pigmy wretch*——] This is ſpoken in compliance with the character of a giant; the Phaeacians wondered at the manly ſtature of Ulyſſes; Polypheme ſpeaks of him as a dwarf; his rage undoubtedly made him treat him with ſo much contempt. Nothing in nature can be better imagined than this ſtory of the Cyclops, if we conſider the aſſembly before which it was ſpoken, I mean the Phaeacians, who had been driven from their habitation by the Cyclopeans, as appears from the ſixth of the Odyſſey, and compelled to make a new ſettlement in their preſent country: Ulyſſes gratifies them by ſhewing what revenge he took upon one of their antient enemies, and they could not decently refuſe aſſiſtance to a perſon, who had puniſhed thoſe who had inſulted their forefathers.

And ſend thee howling to the realms of night!
As ſure, as Neptune cannot give thee ſight.
Thus I: while raging he repeats his cries,
With hands uplifted to the ſtarry ſkies.
Hear me, Oh Neptune! thou whoſe arms are hurl'd
From ſhore to ſhore, and gird the ſolid world.
If thine I am, nor thou my birth diſown,
And if th' unhappy Cyclop be thy ſon;
Let not Ulyſſes breathe his native air,
Laertes' ſon, of Ithaca the fair.
If to review his country be his fate,
Be it thro' toils and ſuff'rings, long and late,
His loſt companions let him firſt deplore;
Some veſſel, not his own, tranſport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign ſuff'rings freed,
More near and deep, domeſtic woes ſucceed!
With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
And angry Neptune heard th' unrighteous pray'r.

ỳ. 617. *The prayer of the Cyclops.*] This is a maſterpiece of Ulyſſes; he ſhews Neptune to be his enemy, which might deter the Phaeacians from aſſiſting in his tranſportation, yet brings this very circumſtance as an argument to induce them to it. O Neptune, *ſays the Cyclops, deſtroy Ulyſſes, or if he be fated to return, may it be in a veſſel not of his own!* Here he plainly tells the Phaeacians that the prayer of Cyclops was almoſt accompliſhed, for his own ſhips were deſtroyed by Neptune, and now he was ready to ſail in a foreign veſſel; by which the whole prayer would be completed. By this he perſuades them, that they were the people ordained by the fates to land him in his own country.

A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
He whirl'd it round: it ſung acroſs the main:
It fell, and bruſh'd the ſtern: The billows roar,
Shake at the weight, and refluent beat the ſhore.
With all our force we kept aloof to ſea,
And gain'd the iſland where our veſſels lay.
Our ſight the whole collected navy chear'd,
Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.
There diſembarking on the green ſea-ſide,
We land our cattle, and the ſpoil divide:
Of theſe due ſhares to ev'ry ſailor fall;
The maſter ram was voted mine by all:
And him (the guardian of Ulyſſes' fate)
With pious mind to heav'n I conſecrate.
But the great God, whoſe thunder rends the ſkies,
Averſe, beholds the ſmoking ſacrifice;
And ſees mē wand'ring ſtill from coaſt to coaſt;
And all my veſſels, all my people, loſt!
While thoughtleſs we indulge the genial rite,
As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite;
'Till evening Phoebus roll'd away the light:
Stretch'd on the ſhore in careleſs eaſe we reſt,
'Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the eaſt.

ỳ. 462. *The maſter ram was voted mine.*] This perhaps might be a preſent of honour and diſtinction: but I ſhould rather take it with Euſtathius to be the ram which brought Ulyſſes out of the den of Polypheme. That hero immediately offers it in ſarrifice to Jupiter, in gratitude for his deliverance; an inſtance of piety to be imitated in more enlightened ages.

Then from their anchors all our ſhips unbind,
And mount the decks, and call the willing wind.
Now rang'd in order on our banks, we ſweep
With haſty ſtrokes the hoarſe-reſounding deep;
Blind to the future, penſive with our fears,
Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

The book concludes with a teſtimony of this hero's humanity; in the midſt of the joy for his own ſafety his generous heart finds room for a tender ſentiment for the loſs of his companions; both his joys and his ſorrows are commendable and virtuous.

Virgil has borrowed this epiſode of Polyphemus, and inſerted it into the third of the Æneis. I will not preſume to decide which author has the greateſt ſucceſs, they both have their peculiar excellencies. Rapin confeſſes this epiſode to be equal to any parts of the Iliad, that it is an original, and that Homer introduced that monſtrous character to ſhew the marvellous, and paint it in a new ſet of colours. Demetrius Phalereus calls it a piece of ſublime ſtrangely horrible; and Longinus, even while he is condemning the Odyſſey, allows this adventure of Polypheme to be very great and beautiful; (for ſo Monſieur Boileau underſtands Longinus, though Monſieur Dacier differs from his judgment.) In Homer we find a greater variety of natural incidents than in Virgil, but in Virgil a greater pomp of verſe. Homer is not uniform in his deſcription, but ſometimes ſtoops perhaps below the dignity of epic poetry; Virgil walks along with an even, grave, and majeſtic pace: they both raiſe our admiration, mixed with delight and terror.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Adventures with Æolus, the Leſtrigons, and Circe.

Ulyſſes arrives at the Iſland of Æolus, who gives him proſperous winds, and incloſes the adverſe ones in a bag, which his companions untying, they are driven back again, and rejected. Then they ſail to the Leſtrigons, where they loſe eleven ſhips, and with one only remaining, proceed to the iſland of Circe. Eurylochus is ſent firſt with ſome companions, all which, except Eurylochus, are transformed into ſwine. Ulyſſes then undertakes the adventure, and by the help of Mercury, who gives him the herb Moly, overcomes the enchantreſs, and procures the reſtoration of his men. After a year's ſtay with her, he prepares at her inſtigation for his voyage to the infernal ſhades.

AT length we reach'd Æolia's ſea-girt ſhore,
Where great Hippotades the ſceptre bore,
A floating iſle! High-rais'd by toil divine,
Strong walls of braſs the rocky coaſt confine.

Poetry is a mixture of hiſtory and fable; the foundation is hiſtorical, becauſe the poet does not entirely neglect truth; the reſt is fabulous, becauſe naked truth would not be ſufficiently ſurprizing; for the marvellous ought to take place, eſpecially in epic poetry. But it may be aſked, does not Homer offend againſt all degrees

Six blooming youths, in private grandeur bred,
And ſix fair daughters, grac'd the royal bed:

of probability in theſe epiſodes of the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, Cyclops and Antiphates? How are theſe incredible ſtories to be reduced into the bounds of probability? it is true, the marvellous ought to be uſed in epic poetry; but ought it to tranſgreſs all power of belief? Ariſtotle in his Art of poetry lays down a rule to juſtify theſe incidents: *A poet*, ſays that author, *ought to prefer things impoſſible, provided they are probable, before things poſſible, that are nevertheleſs incredible.* Chap. 15. This rule is not without obſcurity; but Monſieur Dacier has explained it in his annotations upon that author: a thing may be impoſſible, and yet probable: thus when the poet introduces a deity, any incident humanly impoſſible receives a full probability by being aſcribed to the ſkill and power of a god: it is thus we juſtify the ſtory of the transformation of the ſhip of the Phaeacians into a rock, and the fleet of Æneas into ſea nymphs. But ſuch relations ought not to be too frequent in a poem; for it is an eſtabliſhed rule, that all incidents which require a divine probability only, ſhould be ſo diſengaged from the action, that they may be ſubſtracted from it without deſtroying it; for inſtance, if we omit the transformation of the ſhip, the action of the Odyſſey will retain the ſame perfection. And therefore thoſe epiſodes which are neceſſary, and make eſſential parts of the poem, ought to be grounded upon human probability; now the epiſodes of Circe, Polypheme, the Sirens, etc. are neceſſary to the action of the Odyſſey: but will any man ſay they are within the bounds of human probability? How then ſhall we ſolve this difficulty? Homer artificially has brought them within the degrees of it; he makes Ulyſſes relate them before a credulous and ignorant aſſembly; he lets us into the character of the

Theſe ſons their ſiſters wed, and all remain
Their parents pride, and pleaſure of their reign.

Phaeacians, by ſaying they were a very dull nation, in the ſixth book,

Where never ſcience rear'd her laurel'd head.

It is thus the poet gives probability to his fables, by reciting them to a people who believed them, and who through a lazineſs of life were fond of romantic ſtories; he adapts himſelf to his audience, and yet even here he is not unmindful of his more intelligent readers; he gives them, (obſerves Boſſu) in theſe fables all the pleaſure that can be reaped from phyſical or moral truths, diſguiſed under miraculous allegories, and by this method reconciles them to poetical probability.

There are ſeveral heads to which probability may be reduced; either to divinity, and then nothing is improbable, for every thing is poſſible to a deity; or to our ideas of things whether true or falſe: thus in the deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell, there is not one word of probability or hiſtoric truth; but if we examine it by the ideas that the old world entertained of hell, it becomes probable; or laſtly, we may have reſpect to vulgar opinion or fame; for a poet is at liberty to relate a falſhood, provided it be commonly believed to be true. We might have recourſe to this laſt rule, which is likewiſe laid down by Ariſtotle, to vindicate the Odyſſey, if there were occaſion for it; for in all ages ſuch fables have found belief.

I will only add, that Virgil has given a ſanction to theſe ſtories, by inſerting them in his Æneis; and Horace calls them by the remarkable epithet of ſpecious miracles.

——*Ut ſpecioſa dehinc miracula promat,*
Antiphaten, Scyllamque et cum Cyclope Charybdin.

Longinus calls theſe fables dreams, but adds, that they

All day they feaſt, all day the bowls flow round,
And joy and muſic thro' the iſle reſound:

are the dreams of Jupiter; he likewiſe blames thoſe epiſodes, becauſe in all of them there is much more fable and narration than action; which criticiſm may perhaps be too ſevere, if we conſider that paſt adventures are here brought into preſent uſe, and though they be not actions, yet they are the repreſentations of actions, agreeable to the nature of epiſodes.

It may be queſtioned if Virgil is ſo happy in the choice of the audience, to which he relates many of theſe fables; the Carthaginians were not ignorant, like the Phaeacians: from whence then do his ſtories receive their probability? it is not ſo eaſy to anſwer this objection, unleſs we have recourſe to common fame: Virgil was not the author of them, Homer had eſtabliſhed them, and brought them into fame, ſo that Virgil had common opinion to vindicate them, joined with Homer's authority.

ỳ. 1. *We reach'd Æolia's ſhore.*] It is difficult to diſtinguiſh what is truth from what is fiction in this relation: Diodorus, who was a Sicilian, ſpeaks of Æolus, and refers to this paſſage: 'this is that Æolus, ſays he, 'who entertained Ulyſſes in his voyages: he is reported 'to have been a pious and juſt prince, and given to ho-'ſpitality, and therefore φίλος ἀθανάτοις, as Homer 'expreſſes it.' But whence has the fable of his being the governor of the winds taken its foundation? Euſtathius tells us, that he was a very wiſe man, and one who from long obſervation could foretell what weather was like to follow: others ſay he was an aſtronomer, and ſtudied chiefly the nature of the winds; and as Atlas from his knowlege in aſtrology was ſaid to ſuſtain the heavens; ſo Æolus, from his experience and obſervation, was fabled to be the ruler or diſpoſer of the winds. But what explication can be given of this bag,

At night each pair on ſplendid carpets lay,
And crown'd with love the pleaſures of the day.

in which he is ſaid to bind the winds? Eratoſthenes, continues Euſtathius, ſaid pleaſantly, that we ſhall then find the places where Ulyſſes voyaged, when we have diſcovered the artiſt, or cobler, τὸν σκυτέα, who ſewed up this bag of the winds. But the reaſon of the fiction is ſuppoſed to be this: Æolus taught the uſe and management of ſails, and having foretold Ulyſſes from what quarter the winds would blow, he may be ſaid to have gathered them into a kind of encloſure, and retained them as uſe ſhould require. Diodorus explains it a little differently, lib. 5. Πρὸς δὲ τυτοὶς τὴν τῶν ἱςίων χρείαν τοῖς ναυτικοῖς ἐπεισηγήσασθαι, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς τῶ πυρὸς προσημασίας παρατετηρηκότα, προλέγειν τὸς ἐπιχωρίυς ἀνέμυς ευςόχως ἐξ ὧν ταμίαν ἀνέμων μῦθος ἀνέδειξε; that is, 'He taught the uſe of ſails, and having learn-'ed from obſerving the bearing of the ſmoke and fires '(of thoſe Vulcanian iſlands) what winds would blow, 'he uſually foretold them with exactneſs, and from 'hence he is fabled to be the diſpoſer of the winds.' The words of Varro, quoted by Servius, are to the ſame purpoſe: *Varro autem dicit hunc inſularum regem fuiſſe, ex quarum nebulis et fumo Vulcaniae inſulae praedicens futura flabra ventorum, ab imperitis viſus eſt ventos ſua poteſtate retinere.*

Polybius will not admit that this ſtory of Æolus is entirely fable; and Strabo is of the ſame opinion, that Ulyſſes was in the Sicilian ſeas; and that there was ſuch a king as Æolus, he affirms to be truth; but that he met with ſuch adventures is, in the main, fiction. There may another reaſon, as Euſtathius obſerves, be given for the fiction of binding up the winds in a bag: they who practiſed the art of incantation or charms, made uſe of the ſkin of a dolphin, and pretended by certain ceremonies to bind or looſe the winds as they pleaſed;

This happy port affords our wand'ring fleet,
A month's reception, and a ſafe retreat.

and this practice is a ſufficient ground to build upon in poetry.

The ſolution alſo of Bochart is worth our notice: Homer borrowed the word Αἴολος from the Phoenician Aol, which ſignifies a whirlwind or tempeſt, from whence the Greeks formed their word ἀελλὰ; the Phoenicians obſerving the king of this iſland to be very expert in foretelling the winds, called him king Aolin, or king of the winds and ſtorms; from hence Homer formed a proper name and called him Αἴολος. It muſt be confeſſed, that this ſolution is ingenious, and not without an appearance of probability.

But having laid together what may be ſaid in vindication of this ſtory of Æolus: juſtice requires that I ſhould not ſuppreſs what has been objected againſt it by no leſs a critic than Longinus: he obſerves that a genius naturally lofty ſometimes falls into trifling; an inſtance of this, adds he, is what Homer ſays of the bag wherein Æolus incloſed the winds. Cap. 7. περὶ ὑψ. 3. *A floating iſle*——] The word in the original is πλωτῇ: ſome take it, as Euſtathius remarks, for a proper name; but Ariſtarchus believes Homer intended to expreſs by it a floating iſland, that was frequently removed by concuſſions and earthquakes, for it is ſeen ſometimes on the right, at other times on the left hand; the like has been ſaid of Delos; and Herodotus thus deſcribes the iſland Echemis in the Ægyptian ſeas. Dionyſius, in his περιήγησις, affirms, that this iſland is not called by the name of πλωτὴ, by reaſon of its floating, but becauſe it is an iſland of fame, and much ſailed unto, or πλωτὴ by navigators; that is, πλεομένη, or ἐν τόποις πλεομένοις κειμένη, or lying in ſeas of great navigation: but perhaps the former opinion of A-

Full

Full oft the monarch urg'd me to relate 15
The fall of Ilion, and the Grecian fate;

riſtarchus may be preferable, as it beſt contributes to raiſe the wonder and admiration of the credulous ignorant Phaeacians, which was the ſole intention of Ulyſſes.

Theſe iſlands were ſeven in number, (but eleven at this day) Strongyle, Hiera, Didyme, Hiceſia, Lipara, Erycodes, and Phaenicodes, all lying in the Sicilian ſeas, as Diodorus Siculus teſtifies; but differs in the name of one of the iſlands.

Strabo is of opinion, that the iſland called by Homer, the Æolian, is Strongyle; Ἡ δὲ Στρογγύλη, ἐσί διαπυρὸς, τῷ φέργει πλεονεκτοῦσα, ἐνθαυθα δὲ τὸν Αἴολον οἰκῆσαι φασὶ. 'This iſland Strongyle abounds with ſubterraneous fires, etc. and here Æolus is ſaid to have reigned.' Pliny agrees with Strabo, lib. 3. but Dacier underſtands it to be Lipara, according to Virgil, Æn. lib. 8. but in reality the ſeven were all called the Æolian iſlands.

Inſula Sicanium juxta latus, Æoliamque
Erigitur Liparen, fumantibus ardua ſuxis.

But why is it fabled to be ſurrounded with a wall of braſs? Euſtathius ſays, that this may proceed from its being almoſt inacceſſible; but this reaſon is not ſufficient to give foundation to ſuch a fiction. Dacier obſerves that it is thus deſcribed, becauſe of the ſubterranean fires, which from time to time break out from the entrails of this iſland. Ariſtotle ſpeaking of Lipara, which is the moſt conſiderable of the Æolian iſlands, thus deſcribes it; 'all night long the iſland Lipara appears enlightened with fires.' The ſame relation agrees witth Strongyle, called Strombolo at this day.

I will take the liberty to propoſe a conjecture, which may perhaps not unhappily give a reaſon of this fiction of the wall of braſs, from this deſcription of Ariſtotle: all night fires appear (ſays that author) from this iſland,

Full oft I told: At length for parting mov'd;
The king with mighty gifts my ſuit approv'd.

and theſe fires falling upon the ſeas, might caſt a ruddy reflection round the iſland, which to navigators might look like a wall of braſs encloſing it. This is but a conjecture drawn from appearances; but to write according to appearances is allowable in poetry, where a ſeeming or a real truth may be uſed indifferently.

℣. 5. *Six blooming youths——and ſix fair daughters.*] Diodorus Siculus mentions the names of the ſix ſons of Æolus, but is ſilent concerning his daughters, and therefore others, who can find myſteries in the plaineſt deſcription, aſſure us, that this is not to be underſtood hiſtorically, but allegorically: Æolus repreſents the year, his twelve children are the twelve months, ſix of which are female, to denote thoſe ſix months in which the earth brings forth her fruits; by his ſix ſons the other months are underſtood, in which the ſeed is ſown, or in which the herbs, fruits, etc. are nouriſhed in order to production; theſe may therefore be called males. But this is to darken an author into myſtery, not to explain him. Dacier gives us another allegorical interpretation: the poet makes him the governor of the winds, and gives him twelve children; theſe denote the twelve principal winds; half of which children are males, half females; the males denote the winter winds, which as it were brood upon the earth, and generate its increaſe; the females thoſe warmer ſeaſons of the year, when the more prolific winds blow, and make the earth teem with fruitfulneſs; theſe children of Æolus are in continual feaſts in his palace; that is, the winds are continually fed by the exhalations from the earth, which may be called their food or nouriſhment: the brothers and ſiſters intermarry; this denotes the nature of the winds, which blow promiſcuouſly, and one wind unites itſelf with another from all quarters of the world indifferently: the brothers and ſiſters are ſaid to ſleep by

The adverſe winds in leathern bags he brac'd,
Compreſs'd their force, and lock'd each ſtruggling blaſt:
For him the mighty Sire of Gods aſſign'd
The tempeſt's lord, the tyrant of the wind;
His word alone the liſt'ning ſtorms obey,
To ſmooth the deep, or ſwell the ſoamy ſea,

night together: that in, the winds are uſual ſtill and calm, and as it were reſt together, at that ſeaſon. But what occaſion is there to have recourſe to an uncertain allegory, when ſuch great names as Polybius, Strabo, and Diodorus aſſure us, that this relation is in part true hiſtory; and if there was really ſuch a king as Æolus, why might he not be a father of ſix ſons and as many daughters? I ſhould prefer a plain hiſtory to a dark allegory.

℣. 9. *All day they feaſt,*——
——*and muſic through the iſle reſounds.*]

Homer was not unacquainted with the wonders related of this iſland Lipara. 'In this iſland, ſays Ariſtotle, 'a monument is reported to be, of which they tell mi-'racles: they aſſure us that they hear iſſuing from it 'the ſound of timbrels or cymbals, plainly and diſtinct-'ly.' It is eaſy to perceive that this is founded upon the noiſe the fires make which are incloſed in the caverns in this iſland, and that Homer alludes to the antient name of it, which in the Phoenician language (Meloginin, as Bochart obſerves) ſignifies the land of thoſe who play upon inſtruments. We learn from Callimachus, in his hymn to Diana, that Lipara was originally called Meligounis. *She* (Diana) *went to find out the Cyclops: ſhe found them in Lipara, for that is the name the iſle now bears, but antiently it was called Meligounis; they were labouring a huge maſs of red hot iron,* etc. So that Homer is not all invention, but adapts his poetry to tradition and antient ſtory. Dacier.

Theſe in my hollow ſhip the monarch hung,
Securely fetter'd by a ſilver thong,
But Zephyrus exempt, with friendly gales
He charg'd to fill, and guide the ſwelling ſails:
Rare gift! but oh, what gift to fools avails!
Nine proſp'rous days we ply'd the lab'ring oar;
The tenth preſents our welcome native ſhore:
The hills diſplay the beacon's friendly light,
And riſing mountains gain upon our ſight.

℣. 32. *The hills diſplay the beacon's friendly light.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that theſe fires were a kind of beacons kept continually burning to direct navigators; the ſmoke gave notice by day, the light of the flame by night. Ithaca was invironed with rocks, and conſequently there was a neceſſity for this care, to guide ſeafaring men to avoid thoſe rocks, and to point out the places of landing with ſecurity.

But is it not an imputation to the wiſdom of Ulyſſes, to ſuffer himſelf to be ſurprized with ſleep, when he was almoſt ready to enter the ports of his own country? And is it not probable that the joy he muſt be ſuppoſed to receive at the ſight of it, ſhould not induce him to a few hours watchfulneſs? it is eaſier to defend his ſleeping here, than in the 13th of the Odyſſey: the poet very judiciouſly tells us, that Ulyſſes for nine days together almoſt continually waked and took charge of the veſſel, and the word κεκμηῶτα ſhews that nature was wearied out, and that he fell into an involuntary repoſe; it can therefore be no diminution to his character to be forced to yield to the calls of nature, any more than it is to be hungry: his prudence and love of his country ſufficiently appear from the care he took through the ſpace of nine days to arrive at it; ſo that this circumſtance muſt be imputed to the infirmity of human nature, and not to a defect of care or wiſdom in Ulyſſes.

Then firſt my eyes, by watchful toils oppreſt,
Comply'd to take the balmy gifts of reſt;
Then firſt my hands did from the rudder part,
(So much the love of home poſſeſs'd my heart)
When lo! on board a fond debate aroſe;
What rare device thoſe veſſels might encloſe?
What ſum, what prize from Æolus I brought?
Whilſt to his neighbour each expreſs'd his thought.
Say, whence, ye gods, contending nations ſtrive
Who moſt ſhall pleaſe, who moſt our hero give?
Long have his coffers groan'd with Trojan ſpoils;
Whilſt we, the wretched part'ners of his toils,
Reproach'd by want, our fruitleſs labours mourn,
And only rich in barren fame return.
Now Æolus, ye ſee, augments his ſtore:
But come my friends, theſe myſtic gifts explore.
They ſaid: and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound!
The guſhing tempeſt ſweeps the ocean round:

℣. 50. *They ſaid: and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound.*] This relation has been blamed as improbable; what occaſion was there to unbind the bag, when theſe companions of Ulyſſes might have ſatisfied their curioſity that there was no treaſure in it from the lightneſs of it? But Homer himſelf obviates this objection, by telling us that Æolus faſtened it in the veſſel, as Euſtathius obſerves,

Νηῒ δ' ἐνὶ γλαφυρῇ κατέδει--------

Boſſu gives us the moral of this fable or allegory, cap. 10. lib. 1. By the winds incloſed in the bag, into which the companions of Ulyſſes were ſo unwiſe as to pry, is to be underſtood, that we ought not to intrude into

Snatch'd in the whirl, the hurried navy flew,
The ocean widen'd, and the ſhores withdrew.
Rowz'd from my fatal ſleep, I long debate
If ſtill to live, or deſp'rate plunge to fate:
Thus doubting, proſtrate on the deck I lay,
Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.
Mean-while our veſſels plough the liquid plain,
And ſoon the known Æolian coaſt regain,
Our groans the rocks re-murmur'd to the main.
We leap'd on ſhore, and with a ſcanty feaſt
Our thirſt and hunger haſtily repreſs'd;

thoſe myſteries of government which the prince intends to keep ſecret: the tempeſts and confuſions raiſed by the looſing the winds, repreſent the miſchiefs and diſorders that ariſe from ſuch a vain curioſity in the ſubject: a wiſe people permit the winds to reſt without moleſtation, and ſatisfy themſelves with thoſe that the prince is pleaſed to releaſe, and believe them to be the moſt proper and uſeful. But whatever judgment is paſſed upon this explication, it is certainly an inſtance of the ill conſequences of avarice, and unſeaſonable curioſity.

℣. 55. *If ſtill to live, or deſp'rate plunge to fate.*] We ought not to infer from this paſſage, that Homer thought a perſon might lawfully take away his own life to avoid the greateſt dangers; what Ulyſſes here ſpeaks ariſes from the violence of a ſudden paſſion, and gives us a true picture of human nature: the wiſeſt of men are not free from the infirmity of paſſion, but reaſon corrects and ſubdues it. This is the caſe in the inſtance before us; Ulyſſes has ſo much of the man in him as to be liable to the paſſion of man; but ſo much virtue and wiſdom as to reſtrain and govern it.

That done, two choſen heralds ſtrait attend
Our ſecond progreſs to my royal friend;
And him amidſt his jovial ſons we found;
The banquet ſteaming, and the goblets crown'd:
There humbly ſtopp'd with conſcious ſhame and awe,
Nor nearer than the gate preſum'd to draw.
But ſoon his ſons their well-known gueſt deſcry'd,
And ſtarting from their couches loudly cry'd,
Ulyſſes here! what daemon cou'dſt thou meet
To thwart thy paſſage and repel thy fleet?
Waſt thou not furniſh'd by our choiceſt care
For Greece, for home, and all thy ſoul held dear?
Thus they; in ſilence long my fate I mourn'd,
At length theſe words with accent low return'd.
Me, lock'd in ſleep, my faithleſs crew bereft
Of all the bleſſings of your god-like gift!
But grant, oh grant our loſs we may retrieve:
A favour you, and you alone can give.
Thus I with art to move their pity try'd,
And touch'd the youths; but their ſtern ſire reply'd,
Vile wretch, begone! this inſtant I command
Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallow'd land.

℣. 83. *Vile wretch, begone!*——] This unhoſpitable character of Æolus may ſeem contrary to the humane diſpoſition which Homer before aſcribed to him; he therefore tells us, that Ulyſſes appeared to him to be an object of divine vengeance, and that to give him aſſiſtance would be to act againſt the will of the gods. But obſerves Euſtathius, is not this an ill-choſen relation to be made to the Phaeacians, as the critics have

His baneful ſuit pollutes theſe bleſs'd abodes,
Whoſe fate proclaims him hateful to the gods.
Thus fierce he ſaid: we ſighing went our way,
And with deſponding hearts put off to ſea.
The ſailors ſpent with toils their folly mourn,
But mourn in vain; no proſpect of return.
Six days and nights a doubtful courſe we ſteer,
The next proud Lamos' ſtately tow'rs appear,
And Laeſtrigonia's gates ariſe diſtinct in air.
The ſhepherd quitting here at night the plain,
Calls, to ſucceed his cares, the watchful ſwain;

remarked, and might it not deter them from aſſiſting a man whom Æolus had rejected as an enemy to the gods? He anſwers, that it was evident to the Phaeacians, that Ulyſſes was no longer under the diſpleaſure of heaven, that the imprecations of Polypheme were fulfilled; he being to be tranſported to his own country by ſtrangers, according to his prayer in the ninth of the Odyſſey, and conſequently the Phaeacians have nothing to fear from the aſſiſtance which they lend Ulyſſes.

℣. 94. *The ſhepherd quitting here at night the plain*, etc.] This paſſage has been thought to be very difficult: but Euſtathius makes it intelligible: the land of the Laeſtrigons was fruitful, and fit for paſturage; it was the practice to tend the ſheep by day, and the oxen by night; for it was infeſted by a kind of fly that was very grievous to the oxen by day, whereas the wool of the ſheep defended them from it: and therefore the ſhepherds drove their oxen to paſture by night. If the ſame ſhepherd who watched the ſheep by day, could paſs the night without ſleep, and attend the oxen, he performed a double duty, and conſequently merited a double reward. Homer ſays, that the ways of the night and day were near to each other, that is, the pa-

But he that ſcorns the chains of ſleep to wear,
And adds the herdſman's to the ſhepherd's care,
So near the paſtures, and ſo ſhort the way,
His double toils may claim a double pay,
And join the labours of the night and day.

ſtures of the ſheep and oxen, and the ways that led to them were adjacent; for the ſhepherd that drove his flocks home, (or εἰσελάων, as Homer expreſſes it,) could call to the herdſman, who drove his herds to paſture, or ἐξελάων, and be heard with eaſe, and therefore the roads muſt be adjoining.

Crates gives us a very different interpretation: he aſſerts that Homer intended to expreſs the ſituation of the Laeſtrigons, and affirms that they lay under the head of the dragon, Κεφαλὴν δράκοντος, (which Dacier renders the tail of the dragon) according to Aratus,

ἤχιπερ (κεφαλῇ) ἄκραι
Μίσγονται δύσιες, καὶ ἀνατολαὶ ἀλλήλῃσιν.

which Tully thus tranſlates,

Hoc caput hic paullum ſeſe ſubitoque recondit
Ortus ubi atque obitus partem admiſcentur in unam.

If this be true, the poet intended to expreſs that there was ſcarce any night at all among the Laeſtrigons, according to that of Manilius,

Vixque ortus, occaſus erit———

But how will this agree with the ſituation of the Laeſtrigons, who were undoubtedly Sicilians, acccording to the direct affirmation of Thucydides, lib. 6. of his hiſtory? Beſides, if Laeſtrigonia lay under the head of the dragon, Ulyſſes muſt have ſpent ſeven months inſtead of ſeven days, in ſailing from the Æolian iſlands to that country. Neither is there any neceſſity to have recourſe to this ſolution; for what ſignifies the length

Within a long receſs a bay there lies,
Edg'd round with cliffs, high pointing to the ſkies;

or ſhortneſs of the day to the double wages of the ſhepherds, when it was paid to him who took upon him a double charge of watching the whole day and night, which comprehends the ſpace of four and twenty hours; which alone, whether the greater part of it was by night or day, entitled the ſhepherd to a double reward? I therefore ſhould rather chuſe the former interpretation, with which Didymus agrees. Νυκτερινὰι, καὶ ἡμερινὰι νομαὶ ἐγγὺς εἰσὶ τῆς πόλεως; that is, 'both 'the night paſtures, and thoſe of the day, are adjacent 'to the city.'

It is evident that the Laeſtrigons alſo inhabited Formiae, a city of Campania near Cajeta: thus Horace, lib. 3. Ode 17.

Aeli vetuſto nobilis ab Lamo—
Auctore ab illo ducit originem
Qui Formiarum maenia dicitur
Princeps———

It was called Hormiae, according to Strabo, Φορμίαι. Λακωνικὸν κτίσμα, Ορμίαι λεγόμενον διὰ τὸ εὔορμον; that is, 'Formiae was built by a Laconian, 'called alſo Hormiae, from its being an excellent ſtati'on for ſhips.' Tully had this place in view in his epiſtle to Atticus, lib. 2. Epiſt. 13. *Si vero in hanc* τηλέπυλον, *veneris* λαιστρυγονίην, *Formias dico.* And Pliny to the ſame purpoſe, lib. 3. cap. 5. *Oppidum Formiae, Hormiae ante dictum, ut exiſtimavere, antiqua Laeſtrigonum ſedes.* But how will this agree with Homer, who places them in Sicily, and Tully and Pliny in Campania in Italy?

Dacier anſwers, that they were originally Sicilians, as appears from Pliny, lib. 3. cap. 8. *Flumina, Symaethus, Terias, intus Laeſtrigonii campi, oppidum Leontini.*

The jutting ſhores that ſwell on either ſide
Contract its mouth, and break the ruſhing tide.
Our eager ſailors ſeize the fair retreat,
And bound within the port their crouded fleet:
For here retir'd the ſinking billows ſleep,
And ſmiling calmneſs ſilver'd o'er the deep.
I only in the bay refus'd to moor,
And fix'd, without, my haulſers to the ſhore.

And why might not theſe Laeſtrigons, or a colony of them, leave Sicily to ſettle in Italy, as it is evident the Phaeacians had done, and fixed in Corcyra? Bochart's opinion concerning this nation is not to be neglected; the words Laeſtrigons and Leontines are of the ſame import; Laeſtrigon is a Phoenician name, *Lais tircam*, that is, *a devouring lion;* this is rendered literally by the Latin word *Leontinum*, and both denote the ſavage and leonine diſpoſition of this people; the word *lamus* is alſo of Phaenician extract: *laham*, or *lahama*, ſignifies a *devourer;* from hence probably was derived that Lamia, who devoured young infants, mentioned by Horace in his Art of Poetry.

Nec pranſae Lamiae vivum puerum extrahat alvo.

We are informed that there was a queen of Libya of that name, by Diodorus Siculus; ſhe was a perſon of great beauty, but of great barbarity.

℣. 109. *I only in the bay refus'd to moor.*] It may appear at the firſt view, that Ulyſſes took more care of himſelf than of his companions; and it may be aſked, why did he not reſtrain them from entering the bay, when his caution plainly ſhews that he was apprehenſive of danger? had he more fear than the reſt of the company? No; but a greater foreſight; a wiſe man provides as far as lies within his power againſt all contingencies, and the event ſhews, that his companions

From thence we climb'd a point, whoſe airy brow
Commands the proſpect of the plains below:
No tracts of beaſts, or ſigns of men we found,
But ſmoky volumes rolling from the ground.
Two with our herald thither we command,
With ſpeed to learn what men poſſeſs'd the land.
They went, and kept the wheel's ſmooth beaten road
Which to the city drew the mountain wood;
When lo! they met, beſide a cryſtal ſpring,
The daughter of Antiphates the king;

were raſh, and he wiſe to act with ſo much circumſpection; they ſtaid not for command, and therefore were juſtly puniſhed for acting precipitately without the direction of their general and king.

℣. 120. *The daughter of Antiphates*, etc.] It is not evident from whence Ulyſſes had the knowlege of theſe particulars; the perſons whom he ſent to ſearch the land periſhed in the attempt; or were deſtroyed with the fleet by the Laeſtrigons; how then could this relation be made to Ulyſſes? It is probable that he had his information from Circe or Calypſo; for Circe in the ſequel of the Odyſſey tells Ulyſſes, that ſhe was acquainted with all the ſufferings that he had undergone by ſea; and if ſhe, as a goddeſs, knew his adventures, why might ſhe not relate to him theſe particulars? Homer a little lower tells us, that the Laeſtrigons transfixed (πειρόντες) the companions of Ulyſſes, and then carried them away on their weapons like ſo many fiſhes; others prefer ἐιρόντες, that is, connecting them together like a range of fiſhes; both which very well expreſs the prodigious ſtrength of theſe giants: others chuſe the word ἀσπαίροντας, or, 'they eat them yet 'alive (*palpitantes*) like fiſhes.' The preference is ſubmitted to the reader. Euſtathius.

She

She to Artacia's ſilver ſtreams came down,
(Artacia's ſtreams alone ſupply the town:)
The damſel they approach, and aſk'd what race
The people were? who monarch of the place?
With joy the maid th' unwary ſtrangers heard,
And ſhew'd them where the royal dome appear'd.
They went; but as they entring ſaw the queen
Of ſize enormous, and terrific mien,
(Not yielding to ſome bulky mountain's height)
A ſudden horror ſtruck their aking ſight.
Swift at her call her huſband ſcowr'd away
To wreak his hunger on the deſtin'd prey;
One for his food the raging glutton flew,
But two ruſh'd out, and to the navy flew.
Balk'd of his prey, the yelling monſter flies,
And fills the city with his hideous cries;
A ghaſtly band of giants hear the roar,
And pouring down the mountains, croud the ſhore.
Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,
And daſh the ruins on the ſhips below:

I will only add, that poſſibly the relation of the barbarity of Polypheme, and Antiphates, with reſpect to their eating the fleſh of men, may not be entirely fabulous: modern hiſtory aſſures us, that ſavages have been found in parts of the world lately diſcovered, who eat the bodies of their enemies: it is therefore no wonder that the more polite and civilized nations of antiquity, looked upon ſuch men as monſters, and that the poets painted them as ſuch, or perhaps aggravated the *ferte*, or fierceneſs of their features, ſtruck with horror at their brutal inhumanity.

The crackling veſſels burſt; hoarſe groans ariſe,
And mingled horrors echo to the ſkies;
The men, like fiſh, they ſtuck upon the flood,
And cram'd their filthy throats with human food.
Whilſt thus their fury rages at the bay,
My ſword our cables cut, I call'd to weigh;
And charg'd my men, as they from fate would flie,
Each nerve to ſtrain, each bending oar to ply.
The ſailors catch the word, their oars to ſeize,
And ſweep with equal ſtrokes the ſmoky ſeas;
Clear of the rocks the impatient veſſel flies;
Whilſt in the port each wretch encumber'd dies.
With earneſt haſte my frighted ſailors preſs,
While kindling tranſports glow'd at our ſucceſs;
But the ſad fate that did our friends deſtroy
Cool'd every breaſt, and damp'd the riſing joy.

Now dropp'd our anchors in th' Æaean bay,
Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the day;

℣. 158. *Where Circe dwelt.*] Heſiod in his Theogony agrees with Homer as to the genealogy of Circe and Æetes.

Πειλῳ δ' ἀνάμαντι τέκε κλυτὴ ὠκεανίνη
Περσηΐς, Κίρκην τε καὶ Αἰήτην βασιλῆα.

That is, 'Perſeis the daughter of Oceanus bore to 'Pl oebus, Circe and king Æetes.' But why are they fabled to be the offspring of the ſun? Euſtathius anſwers, either from their high birth, as the great perſonages of antiquity were called Διογενεῖς, or the ſons of Jupiter, and the ſun in the antient mythology repreſented that deity; or from their extraordinary beauty, which might be compared to the ſun; or from

Her mother Perſe, of old Ocean's ſtrain,
Thus from the ſun deſcended, and the main;
(From the ſame lineage ſtern Æaetes came
The far-fam'd brother of th' enchantreſs dame)
Goddeſs, and queen, to whom the pow'rs belong
Of dreadful magic, and commanding ſong.
Some god directing, to this peaceful bay
Silent we came, and melancholy lay,

their illuſtrious actions. But perhaps the whole might be derived from the way of ſpeaking among the orientals; at this day we are informed from the beſt hiſtorians, that ſuch language prevails in the eaſtern countries, and kings and great perſonages are called the brothers or offspring of the ſun.

This Æaea is a mountain or promontory in Italy: perhaps originally an iſland, and ſtill keeping the reſemblance of it. Thus Procopius, Gothicorum, lib. 1. *Cerceium haud modico tractu in mare porrectum inſulae ſpeciem fert, tam praeternavigantibus quam terreſtri itinere praetereuntibus:* and Strabo, lib 5. Κιρκαῖον ὄρος νησιάζον θαλάττῃ τε καὶ ἕλεσι. But is the relation that Homer makes of this iſland, and of Circe, agreeable to truth? Undoubtedly it is not; but Homer was very well acquainted with the ſtory of Medea, and applies what was reported of that enchantreſs to Circe, and gives the name of Æaea to the iſland of Circe, in reſemblance to Æa, a city of Colchos, the country of Medea and Æetes. That Homer was not a ſtranger to the ſtory of Medea is evident, for he mentions the ſhip Argo in the twelfth Odyſſey, in which Jaſon ſailed to Colchos, where Medea fell in love with him; ſo that though Circe be a fabled deity, yet what Homer ſays of her, was applicable to the character of another perſon, and conſequently a juſt foundation for a ſtory in poetry. With this opinion Strabo agrees.

Spent and o'erwatch'd. Two days and nights roll'd on,
And now the third ſucceeding morning ſhone,
I climb'd a cliff, with ſpear and ſword in hand,
Whoſe ridge o'erlook'd a ſhady length of land;
To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
Or chearful voice of mortal ſtrike the ear?
From the high point I mark'd, in diſtant view,
A ſtream of curling ſmoke, aſcending blue,
And ſpiry tops, the tufted trees above,
Of Circe's palace boſom'd in the grove.
Thither to haſte, the region to explore,
Was firſt my thought: but ſpeeding back to ſhore

℣. 169. *I climb'd a cliff.*] Scaliger lib. 5. of his Poetics obſerves, that there is a general reſemblance between Ulyſſes in Homer, and Æneas in Virgil, and that Æneas acts in the ſame manner as Ulyſſes.

——exire, locoſque
Explorare novos, quas vento acceſſerit oras,
Qui teneant, (nam inculta videt) hominesne feraene
Quaerere conſtituit.

That critic remarks, that though the attitudes of the two heroes are the ſame, yet they are drawn by Virgil with a more maſterly hand: *Fuſior et latior Homerus invenietur, pictior Virgilius et numeris aſtrictior.*

Ulyſſes himſelf here takes a general view of the iſland, but ſends his companions for a more particular information; this was neceſſary to introduce the following ſtory, and give it an air of probability; if he had made the experiment in his own perſon, his virtue would have been proof againſt the ſorceries of Circe, and conſequently there could not have been room for a deſcription of her enchantments. Euſtathius.

I deem'd it beſt to viſit firſt my crew,
And ſend out ſpies the dubious coaſt to view.
As down the hill I ſolitary go,
Some pow'r divine who pities human woe
Sent a tall ſtag, deſcending from the wood,
To cool his fervor in the cryſtal flood;
Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay,
Stretch'd forth, and panting in the ſunny ray.
I lanc'd my ſpear, and with a ſudden wound
Tranſpierc'd his back, and fix'd him to the ground.
He falls, and mourns his fate with human cries:
Thro' the wide wound the vital ſpirit flies.
I drew, and caſting on the river ſide
The bloody ſpear, his gather'd feet I ty'd
With twining oſiers which the bank ſupply'd.
An ell in length the pliant wiſp I weav'd,
And the huge body on my ſhoulders heav'd:
Then leaning on the ſpear with both my hands,
Up-bore my load, and preſs'd the ſinking ſands,
With weighty ſteps, till at the ſhip I threw
The welcome burden, and beſpoke my crew.
Chear up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
To glide with ghoſts thro' Pluto's gloomy gate.
Food in the deſart land, behold! is given,
Live, and enjoy the providence of heav'n.
The joyful crew ſurvey his mighty ſize,
And on the future banquet feaſt their eyes,
As huge in length extended lay the beaſt;
Then waſh their hands, and haſten to the feaſt.

There, till the ſetting ſun rowl'd down the light,
They ſate indulging in the genial rite,
When evening roſe, and darkneſs cover'd o'er
The face of things, we ſlept along the ſhore.
But when the roſy morning warm'd the eaſt,
My men I ſummon'd, and theſe words addreſt.
Followers and friends; attend what I propoſe:
Ye ſad companions of Ulyſſes' woes!
We know not here what land before us lies,
Or to what quarter now we turn our eyes,
Or where the ſun ſhall ſet, or where ſhall riſe.

℣. 218. *Or where the ſun ſhall ſet, or where ſhall riſe.*] The interpretations of this paſſage are various; ſome, ſays Euſtathius, judge theſe words not to proceed from the ignorance of Ulyſſes, but that they are the language of deſpair ſuggeſted by his continual calamities: for how could Ulyſſes be ignorant of the eaſt or weſt, when he ſaw the ſun riſe and ſet every day? others underſtand it to ſignify, that he was ignorant of the clime of the world (ὅπῃ κοσμικῶ κλίματι) in which this iſland lay. Strabo was of opinion, that the appearance of the heavenly bodies, as the ſtars, etc. were different in this iſland from the poſition which he had ever before obſerved in any country, and therefore he might well confeſs his ignorance, and expreſs his concern for his almoſt deſperate condition. He underſtands by ἠὼς all that region through which the ſun paſſes oppoſite to the north. It is true, that the four quarters of the world may be ſuppoſed to be here mentioned by Ulyſſes, ἠὼς may expreſs the ſouthern parts through which the ſun paſſes, and ζόφος the oppoſite quarter, which may be ſaid comparatively to be ζόφος, or dark. And then the riſing and ſetting of the ſun will undeniably denote the eaſtern and weſtern regions. Spondanus is of opi-

Here let us think (if thinking be not vain)
If any counſel, any hope remain.
Alas! from yonder promontory's brow,
I view'd the coaſt, a region flat and low;
An iſle incircled with the boundleſs flood;
A length of thickets, and entangled wood.

nion, that Homer intended to expreſs the four quarters of the world, otherwiſe the ſecond verſe is a tautology. Dacier calls it an explication of the firſt deſcription. And indeed the mind of man is apt to dwell long upon any object, by which it is deeply affected, as Ulyſſes muſt here be ſuppoſed to be, and therefore he might enlarge upon the ſentiment advanced in the former line. The meaning then will be this. I know not, ſays that hero, where this iſland lies, whether eaſt or weſt, where the ſun riſes, or where he ſets. I ſhould therefore underſtand Ulyſſes to mean, that he knows not how this iſland lies with reſpect to the reſt of the world, and eſpecially to Ithaca his own country. This is evident from his conduct when he ſailed from Formiae the land of the Laeſtrigons; for inſtead of making toward the eaſt where Ithaca lay, he bore to this iſland of Circe, which lies on the weſt of Formiae.

℣. 220. *If any counſel, any hope remain.*] This expreſſion may be thought unworthy of the mouth of an hero, and ſerve only to cauſe his companions to deſpair; but in reality it has a double effect; it gives us a lively picture of human nature, which in the greateſt men will ſhew ſome degrees of ſenſibility, and at the ſame time it arms his friends againſt ſurprize, and ſets the danger they are in full before their eyes, that they may proceed with due circumſpection. We do not find that Ulyſſes abandons himſelf to deſpair, he ſtill acts like a brave man, but joins wiſdom with bravery, and proceeds at once with the caution of a philoſopher, and the ſpirit of an hero.

Some ſmoke I ſaw amid the foreſt riſe,
And all around it only ſeas and ſkies!

With broken hearts my ſad companions ſtood,
Mindful of Cyclops and his human food,
And horrid Laeſtrygons, the men of blood.
Preſaging tears apace began to rain;
But tears in mortal miſeries are vain.
In equal parts I ſtrait divide my band,
And name a chief each party to command;
I led the one, and of the other ſide
Appointed brave Eurylochus the guide.

℣. 236. *Then the in brazen helm the lots we throw.*] Dacier is of opinion that Ulyſſes caſt lots out of an apprehenſion of being diſobeyed if he had given poſitive commands; his companions being ſo greatly diſcouraged by the adventures of Polypheme and Laeſtrigons. It will be a nobler reaſon, and more worthy of an hero to ſay, that Ulyſſes was ſo far from declining a common danger, that he ſubmits himſelf to an equal chance with his companions to undertake it: this expedition appeared very hazardous, and if he had directly commanded a ſelect number of his men to attempt it, they might have thought he had expoſed them to almoſt certain deſtruction; but the contrary conduct takes away this apprehenſion, and at the ſame time ſhews the bravery of Ulyſſes, who puts himſelf upon a level with the meaneſt of his ſoldiers, and is ready to expoſe his perſon to an equality of danger.

Ulyſſes divides his men into two bodies; each contains two and twenty men: this is agreeable, obſerves Euſtathius, to the former account of Homer; each veſſel carried fifty men, ſix out of every one were deſtroyed by the Ciconians, and therefore forty-four is the exact number, incluſive of himſelf and the ſurviving company.

Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
And fortune caſts Eurylochus to go.
He march'd, with twice eleven in his train:
Penſive they march, and penſive we remain.
The palace in a woody vale they found,
High rais'd of ſtone; a ſhaded ſpace around:
Where mountain wolves and brindled lions roam,
(By magic tam'd) familiar to the dome.
With gentle blandiſhment our men they meet,
And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet.

ỳ. 242. *Where mountain wolves and brindled lions*, etc.] Virgil has borrowed almoſt this whole deſcription of Circe, and as Scaliger judges, perhaps with good reaſon, greatly improved it.

Hinc exaudiri gemitus iraeque leonum
Vincla recuſantum, et ſera ſub nocte rudentum,
Setigerique ſues, atque in praeſepibus urſi, etc.

From hence we heard rebellowing from the main,
The roars of lions that refuſe the chain,
The grunts of briſtled boars, and groans of bears,
And herds of howling wolves that ſtun the ſailors ears:
Theſe from their caverns, at the cloſe of night,
Fill the ſad iſle with horror and affright:
Darkling they mourn their fate, whom Circe's pow'r,
That watch'd the moon, and planetary hour,
With words and wicked herbs, from human kind
Had alter'd, and in brutal ſhapes confin'd. DRYDEN.

It muſt be confeſſed, that *Irae leonum vincla recuſantum*, and the epithets and ſhort deſcriptions adapted to the nature of each ſavage, are beautiful additions. Virgil likewiſe differs from Homer in the manner of the deſcri-

As from ſome feaſt a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,

ption: Homer draws the beaſts with a gentleneſs of nature; Virgil paints them with the fierceneſs of ſavages. The reaſon of Homer's conduct is, becauſe they ſtill retained the ſentiments of men, in the forms of beaſts, and conſequently their native tenderneſs.

There is a beautiful moral couched under this fable or allegory: Homer intended to teach, as Euſtathius remarks, that pleaſure and ſenſuality debaſe men into beaſts. Thus Socrates underſtood it, as Xenophon informs us. Perhaps, adds Dacier, by the fawning wolves and lions that guard the portals of Circe's palace, the poet means to repreſent the attendants of ſuch houſes of debauchery, which appear gentle and courteous, but are in reality of a brutal diſpoſition, and more dangerous than lions. But upon what foundation is this fable built? Many writers inform us, that Circe was a famous courtezan, and that her beauty drew her admirers as it were by enchantment. Thus Horace writes,

———Circes pocula noſti,
Quae ſi cum ſociis ſtultus, cupiduſque bibiſſet,
Sub domina Meretrice fuiſſet turpis et excors,
Vixiſſet canis immundus, vel amica luto ſus.

It is evident, that Ulyſſes had a very intimate commerce with Circe, for Heſiod writes that he had two ſons by her, Agrius and Latinus, who afterwards reigned in Tuſcany; other authors call them Nauſithous and Telegonus,

Κίρκη δ' Ἠελίου θυγάτηρ ὑπεριονίδαο
Τέκνατ' Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονος ἐν φιλότητι
Ἄγριον, ἠδὲ Λατῖνον.

Dionyſius Halicarn. and Ariſtotle mention Telegonus as the ſon of Circe and Ulyſſes, who afterwards ſlew

Rejoicing round, ſome morſel to receive,
(Such as the good man ever us'd to give.)

his father with the bone of a fiſh inadvertently. Thus Horace.

Telegoni juga Parricidae.

But then is not this intrigue a breach of morality, and conjugal fidelity in that hero? I refer the reader to note XIV. of the fifth book of the Odyſſey: I ſhall only add, that the notions of morality are now very different from what they were in former ages. Adultery alone was eſteemed criminal, and puniſhed with death by the ancient heathens: concubinage was not only permitted, but thought to be honourable, as appears from the practice, not only of heroes, but even of the pagan deities; and conſequently this was the vice of the age, not in particular of Ulyſſes. But there is a ſtronger objection againſt Ulyſſes, and it may be aſked, how is he to be vindicated for waſting no leſs ſpace than a whole year in dalliance with an harlot? Penelope and his country ſeem both forgotten, and conſequently he appears to neglect his own re-eſtabliſhment, the chief deſign of the Odyſſey: what adds ſome weight to this obſervation is, that his companions ſeem more ſenſible of his long abſence from his country, and regret it more than that hero; for they awake him out of his dream, and intreat him to depart from the iſland. It is therefore neceſſary to take away this objection: for if it be unanſwerable, Ulyſſes is guilty of all the miſeries of his family and country, by neglecting to redreſs them by returning, and therefore he muſt ceaſe to be an hero, and is no longer to be propoſed as a pattern of wiſdom, and imitation, as he is in the opening of the Odyſſey. But the ſtay of Ulyſſes is involuntary, and conſequently irreproachable; he is in the power of a deity, and therefore not capable of departing without her permiſſion: this is evident: for upon the remonſtrance made

Domeſtic thus the griſly beaſts drew near;
They gaze with wonder, not unmixt with fear.
Now on the threſhold of the dome they ſtood,
And heard a voice reſounding thro' the wood:

by his companions, he dares not undertake his voyage without her diſmiſſion. His aſking conſent plainly ſhews that it was not ſafe, if practicable, to go away without it; if he had been a free agent, her leave had been unneceſſary: it is true, ſhe tells him ſhe will not detain him any longer againſt his inclinations; but this does not imply that his ſtay till then had been voluntary, or that he never had intreated to be diſmiſſed before, but rather intimates the contrary: it only ſhews that now at laſt ſhe is willing he ſhould go away. But why ſhould Ulyſſes ſtand in need of being admoniſhed by his companions? does not this imply that he was unmindful of returning? This is only an evidence that they were deſirous to return as well as he; but he makes a wiſe uſe of their impatience, and takes an occaſion from their importunities to preſs for an immediate diſmiſſion.

In ſhort, I am not pleading for perfection in the character of Ulyſſes: human nature allows it not, and therefore it is not to be aſcribed to it in poetry. But if Ulyſſes were here guilty, his character ceaſes to be of a piece: we no longer intereſt ourſelves in his misfortunes, ſince they are all owing to his own folly: the nature of the poem requires, that he ſhould be continually endeavouring to reſtore his affairs: if then he be here ſunk into a lethargy, his character is at once loſt, his calamities are a juſt puniſhment, and the moral of the Odyſſey is deſtroyed, which is to ſhew wiſdom and virtue rewarded, and vice and folly puniſhed by the death of the ſuitors, and re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes.

Plac'd

Plac'd at her loom within, the goddeſs ſung;
The vaulted roofs and ſolid pavement rung.
O'er the fair web the riſing figures ſhine,
Immortal labour! worthy hands divine.
Polites to the reſt the queſtion mov'd,
(A gallant leader, and a man I lov'd.)
What voice celeſtial, chaunting to the loom
(Or nymph, or goddeſs) echoes from the room?
Say ſhall we ſeek acceſs? With that they call;
And wide unfold the portals of the hall.
The goddeſs riſing, aſks her gueſts to ſtay,
Who blindly follow where ſhe leads the way.
Eurylochus alone of all the band,
Suſpecting fraud, more prudently remain'd.
On thrones around, with downy coverings grac'd,
With ſemblance fair th' unhappy men ſhe plac'd.
Milk newly preſt, the ſacred flow'r of wheat,
And honey freſh, and Pramnian wines the treat:
But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl,
With drugs of force to darken all the ſoul:

℣. 272. *But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl.*] It is an undoubted truth, that Homer aſcribes more power to theſe magical drugs and incantations than they have in reality; but we are to remember that he is ſpeaking before a credulous audience, who readily believed theſe improbabilities, and at the ſame time he very judiciouſly provides for the ſatisfaction of his more underſtanding readers, by couching an excellent moral under his fables; *viz.* that by indulging our appetites we ſink below the dignity of human nature, and degenerate into brutality.

Soon in the luſcious feaſt themſelves they loſt,
And drank oblivion of their native coaſt. 275

I am not in the number of thoſe who believe that there never were any magicians who performed things of an uncommon nature: the ſtory of Jannes and Jambres, of the witch of Endor, and Simon Magus, are undeniable inſtances of the contrary. Magic is ſuppoſed to have been firſt practiſed in Ægypt, and to have ſpread afterwards among the Chaldeans: it is very evident that Homer had been in Ægypt, where he might hear an account of the wonders performed by it. Dacier is of opinion, that theſe deluders, or magicians, were mimics of the real miracles of Moſes, and that they are deſcribed with a wand, in imitation of that great prophet.

But if any perſon thinks that magic is mere fable, and never had any exiſtence, yet eſtabliſhed fame and common opinion juſtify a poet for uſing it. What has been more ridiculed than the winds being incloſed in a bag by Æolus, and committed to Ulyſſes? but as abſurd as this appears, more countries than Lapland pretend to the power of ſelling a ſtorm or a fair wind at this day, as is notorious from travellers of credit; and perhaps a poet would not even in theſe ages be thought ridiculous, if ſpeaking of Lapland, he ſhould introduce one of theſe Venefica's, and deſcribe the ceremonies ſhe uſed in the performance of her pretended incantations. Milton not unhappily has introduced the imagined power of theſe Lapland witches into his Paradiſe Loſt.

———*The night-hag, when call'd*
In ſecret, riding thro' the air ſhe comes,
Lur'd with the ſmell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon
Eclipſes at their charms.——

In ſhort, Virgil has imitated Homer in all theſe bold

Inſtant her circling wand the goddeſs waves,
To hogs transforms 'em, and the ſty receives.
No more was ſeen the human form divine,
Head, face and members briſtle into ſwine:
Still curſt with ſenſe, their minds remain alone,
And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
Mean-while the goddeſs in diſdain beſtows
The maſt and acorn, brutal food! and ſtrows
The fruits of cornel, as their feaſt, around;
Now prone and groveling on unſav'ry ground.

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℣. 278. *No more was ſeen the human form divine*, etc.] Longinus here reports a criticiſm of Zoilus; he is very pleaſant upon this transformation of the companions of Ulyſſes, and calls them, *the ſqueaking pigs of Homer*. We may gather from this inſtance the nature of his criticiſms, and conjecture that they tended to turn the fineſt incidents of Homer into ridicule. Burleſque was his talent, and inſtead of informing the reaſon by pointing out the errors of the poem, his only aim was to make his readers laugh; but he drew upon himſelf the indignation of all the learned world: he was known by the name of the vile Thracian ſlave, and lived in great want and poverty; and poſterity proſecutes his memory with the ſame animoſity. The man was really very learned, as Dionyſius Halicarn. informs us: his morals were never reproached, and yet, as Vitruvius relates, he was crucified by Ptolomy, or as others write, ſtoned to death, or burnt alive at Smyrna; ſo that his only crime was his defamation of Homer: a tragical inſtance of the great value which was ſet upon his poetry by antiquity, and of the danger of attacking a celebrated author with malice and envy.

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Eurylochus with penſive ſteps and ſlow,
Aghaſt returns; the meſſenger of woe,
And bitter fate. To ſpeak he made eſſay,
In vain eſſay'd, nor would his tongue obey,
His ſwelling heart deny'd the words their way:
But ſpeaking tears the want of words ſupply,
And the full ſoul burſts copious from his eye.
Affrighted, anxious for our fellows fates,
We preſs to hear what ſadly he relates.

We went, Ulyſſes! (ſuch was thy command)
Thro' the lone thicket, and the deſart land.

ỳ. 295, *etc. We went, Ulyſſes! (ſuch was thy command.)*] We have here a very lively picture of a perſon in a great fright, which was admired, obſerves Euſtathius, by the ancients. There is not only a remarkable harmony in the flowing of the poetry, but the very manner of ſpeaking repreſents the diſorder of the ſpeaker; he is in too great an emotion to introduce his ſpeech by any preface, he breaks at once into it, without preparation, as if he could not ſoon enough deliver his thoughts. Longinus quotes theſe lines as an inſtance of the great judgment of Homer: there is nothing, ſays that critic, which gives more life to a diſcourſe, than the taking away the connections and conjunctions; when the diſcourſe is not bound together and embarraſſed, it walks and ſlides along of itſelf, and will want very little oftentimes of going faſter even than the thought of the orator: thus in Xenophon, *joining their bucklers, they gave back, they fought, they ſlew, they died together;* of the ſame nature is that of Eurylochus.

We went, Ulyſſes—ſuch was thy command——
Acceſs we ſought—nor was accceſs deny'd:

A palace in a woody vale we found
Brown with dark foreſts, and with ſhades around.

Radiant ſhe came—the portals open'd wide, etc.
I only wait behind—of all the train;
I waited long—and ey'd the doors in vain:
The reſt are vaniſh'd—none repaſs'd the gate.

Theſe periods thus cut off, and yet pronounced with precipitation, are ſigns of a lively ſorrow; which at the ſame time hinders, yet forces him to ſpeak.

Many ſuch ſudden tranſitions are to be found in Virgil, of equal beauty with this of Homer:

Me, me, inquam qui feci, in me convertite tela.

Here the poet ſhews the earneſtneſs of the ſpeaker who is in ſo much haſte to ſpeak, that his thoughts run to the end of the ſentence almoſt before his tongue can begin it. Thus Achaemenides in his flight from the Cyclops.

———Per ſidera teſtor,
Per ſuperos, atque hoc caeli ſpirabile lumen,
Tollite me, Teucri.

Here the poet makes no connection with the preceding diſcourſe, but leaves out the *inquit*, to expreſs the precipitation and terror of Achaemenides.

But our countryman Spenſer has equalled, if not ſurpaſſed theſe great poets of antiquity, in painting a figure of terror in the ninth Canto of the Fairy Queen, where Sir Treviſan flies from Deſpair.

He anſwer'd nought at all: but adding new
Fear to his firſt amazement, ſtaring wide
With ſtony eyes, and heartleſs hollow hue,
Aſtoniſh'd ſtood, as one that had eſpy'd

A voice celeſtial echo'd from the dome,
Or nymph, or goddeſs, chaunting to the loom.
Acceſs we ſought, nor was acceſs deny'd:
Radiant ſhe came; the portals open'd wide;

Infernal furies, with their chains unty'd;
Him yet again, and yet again beſpake,
The gentle knight; who nought to him reply'd;
But trembling every joint did inly quake,
And fault'ring tongue at laſt, theſe words ſeem'd forth to ſhake,
For God's dear love, Sir knight, do me not ſlay,
For lo! he comes, he comes, faſt after me,
Eſt looking back, would fain have run away.

The deſcription ſets the figure full before our eyes, he ſpeaks ſhort, and in broken and interrupted periods, which excellently repreſent the agony of his thoughts; and when he is a little more confirmed and emboldened, he proceeds,

And am I now in ſafety ſure, quoth he,
From him who would have forced me to die?
And is the point of death now turn'd from me?
Then I may tell this hapleſs hiſtory.

We ſee he breaks out into interrogations, which, as Longinus obſerves, give great motion, ſtrength, and action to diſcourſe. If the poet had proceeded ſimply, the expreſſion had not been equal to the occaſion; but by theſe ſhort queſtions, he gives ſtrength to it, and ſhews the diſorder of the ſpeaker, by the ſudden ſtarts and vehemence of the periods. The whole Canto of Deſpair is a piece of inimitable poetry; the picture of Sir Treviſan has a general reſemblance to this of Eurylochus, and ſeems to have been copied after it, as will appear upon compariſon.

The goddeſs mild invites the gueſts to ſtay:
They blindly follow where ſhe leads the way.
I only wait behind, of all the train;
I waited long, and ey'd the doors in vain:
The reſt are vaniſh'd, none repaſs'd the gate:
And not a man appears to tell their fate.
I heard, and inſtant o'er my ſhoulders flung
The belt in which my weighty faulchion hung;
(A beamy blade) then ſeiz'd the bended bow,
And bade him guide the way, reſolv'd to go.
He, proſtrate falling, with both hands embrac'd
My knees, and weeping thus his ſuit addreſs'd.

ỳ. 313. *With both hands embrac'd my knees*——] The character of Eurylochus, who had married Climene the ſiſter of Ulyſſes, is the character of a brave man, who being witneſs to the dreadful fate of his companions is diffident of himſelf, and judges that the only way to conquer the danger is to fly from it. To fear upon ſuch an occaſion, obſerves Dacier, is not cowardice, but wiſdom. But what is more remarkable in this deſcription, is the art of Homer in inſerting the character of a brave man under ſo great a conſternation, to ſet off the character of Ulyſſes, who knows how at once to be bold and wiſe; for the more terrible and deſperate the adventure is repreſented by Eurylochus, the greater appears the intrepidity of Ulyſſes, who truſting to his own wiſdom, and the aſſiſtance of the gods, has the courage to attempt it. What adds to the merit of the action is, that he undertakes it ſolely for his companions, as Horace deſcribes him.

Dum ſibi, dum ſociis reditum parat, aſpera multa
Pertulit, adverſis rerum immerſabilis undis.

O king belov'd of Jove! thy ſervant ſpare,
And ah, thyſelf the raſh attempt forbear!
Never, alas! thou never ſhalt return,
Or ſee the wretched for whoſe loſs we mourn.
With what remains, from certain ruin fly,
And ſave the few not fated yet to die.

I anſwer'd ſtern. Inglorious then remain,
Here feaſt and loiter, and deſert thy train.
Alone, unfriended, will I tempt my way;
The laws of fate compel, and I obey.

This ſaid, and ſcornful turning from the ſhore
My haughty ſtep, I ſtalk'd the valley o'er.

℣. 321. ——— *Inglorious then remain,*
Here feaſt and loiter ——]

This expreſſion is uſed ſarcaſtically by Ulyſſes, and in deriſion of his fears. Dacier remarks, that Ulyſſes having not ſeen what is related by Eurylochus, believes his refuſal to return, proceeds from his faint-heartedneſs: an inſtance, adds ſhe, that we frequently form wrong judgments of mens actions, when we are ignorant of the motives of them. I confeſs I am of opinion, that there is ſome degree of cowardice in the character of Eurylochus: a man truly brave would not expreſs ſuch confuſion and terror, in any extremity; he is not to be inſpirited either by Ulyſſes, or the example of his other companions, as appears from the ſequel, inſomuch that Ulyſſes threatens to kill him for a coward; this prevails over his firſt fears, and he ſubmits to meet a future danger, merely to avoid one that is preſent. What makes this obſervation more juſt is, that we never ſee a brave man drawn by Homer or Virgil in ſuch faint colours; but they always diſcover a preſence of mind upon all emergencies.

'Till now approaching nigh the magic bow'r,
Where dwelt th'enchantreſs ſkill'd in herbs of pow'r;
A form divine forth iſſu'd from the wood,
(Immortal Hermes with the golden rod)
In human ſemblance. On his bloomy face
Youth ſmil'd celeſtial, with each opening grace.
He ſeiz'd my hand, and gracious thus began.
Ah whither roam'ſt thou? much-enduring man!
O blind to fate! what led thy ſteps to rove
The horrid mazes of this magic grove?
Each friend you ſeek in yon encloſure lies,
All loſt their form, and habitants of ſtyes.
Think'ſt thou by wit to model their eſcape?
Sooner ſhalt thou, a ſtranger to thy ſhape,
Fall prone their equal: Firſt thy danger know,
Then take the antidote the gods beſtow.
The plant I give thro' all the direful bow'r
Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes
The bowl ſhall ſparkle, and the banquet riſe;
Take this, nor from the faithleſs feaſt abſtain,
For temper'd drugs and poiſons ſhall be vain.
Soon as ſhe ſtrikes her wand, and gives the word,
Draw forth and brandiſh thy refulgent ſword,
And menace death: thoſe menaces ſhall move
Her alter'd mind to blandiſhment and love.
Nor ſhun the bleſſing proffer'd to thy arms,
Aſcend her bed, and taſte celeſtial charms:

So ſhall thy tedious toils a reſpite find,
And thy loſt friends return to humankind.
But ſwear her firſt by thoſe dread oaths that tie
The pow'rs below, the bleſſed in the ſky;
Leſt to the naked ſecret fraud be meant,
Or magic bind thee, cold and impotent.

Thus while he ſpoke, the ſov'reign plant he drew,
Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew,

℣. 361.——*The ſovereign plant he drew,*
Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew, etc.]
This whole paſſage is to be underſtood allegorically. Mercury is reaſon, he being the God of ſcience: the plant which he gives as a preſervative againſt incantation is inſtruction; the root of it is black, the flower white and ſweet; the root denotes that the foundation or principles of inſtruction appear obſcure and bitter, and are diſtaſteful at firſt, according to that ſaying of Plato, *The beginnings of inſtruction are always accompanied with reluctance and pain.* The flower of Moly is white and ſweet; this denotes that the fruits of inſtruction are ſweet, agreeable and nouriſhing. Mercury gives this plant; this intimates, that all inſtruction is the gift of heaven: Mercury brings it not with him, but gathers it from the place where he ſtands, to ſhew that wiſdom is not confined to places, but that every where it may be found, if heaven vouchſafes to diſcover it, and we are diſpoſed to receive and follow it. Thus Iſocrates underſtands the allegory of Moly: he adds, Πικρὰν εἶναι ῥίζαν αὐτῆς τὸ δὲ Μώλυος ἄνθος, λευκὸν κατὰ γάλα διὰ τὴν τῆ τελῆς παιδείας λαμπρότητα ἡδὴ καὶ τὸ ἡδὺ καὶ τρόφιμον. The root of Moly is bitter, but the flower of it white as milk, to denote the excellency of inſtruction, as well as the pleaſure and utility of it in the end. He further illuſtrates the allegory, by adding Καρπὸς τῆς παι-

And ſhew'd its nature and its wond'rous pow'r:
Black was the root, but milky white the flow'r;
Moly the name to mortals hard to find,
But all is eaſy to th' etherial kind.
This Hermes gave, then gliding off the glade
Shot to Olympus from the woodland ſhade.

δεῖας εἰ κ᾽ μὴ γάλακτι ἰκέλυς ἀλλά γλυκεῖς, *etc.* That is, 'the fruits of inſtruction are not only white 'as milk, but ſweet, though they ſpring from a bitter root. Euſtathius.

Maximus Tyrius alſo gives this ſtory an allegorical ſenſe, Diſſert. 16. Αυτὸν μὲν τὸν Ὀδυσσέα οὐχ ὁρᾷς, ὡς πανοίαις συμφοραῖς ἀντιλεχνάμενος ἀρετῇ σώζει, τοῦτω αυτῷ τὸ ἐκ Κίρκης Μῶλυ, τοῦτο τὸ ἐν θαλάττῃ κρήδεμνον; that is, 'Doſt thou not ob-'ſerve Ulyſſes, how by oppoſing virtue to adverſity he 'preſerves his life? This is the Moly that protects him 'from Circe, this is the ſcarf that delivers him from 'the ſtorm, from Polypheme, from hell, *etc.* See alſo Diſſert. 19.

It is pretended that Moly is an Ægyptian plant, and that it was really made uſe of as a preſervative againſt enchantments: but I believe the Moly of Mercury, and the Nepenthe of Helen, are of the ſame production, and grow only in poetical ground.

Ovid has tranſlated this paſſage in his Metamorphoſis, lib. 14.

Pacifer huic dederat florem Cyllenius album;
Moly vocant ſuperi, nigra radice tenetur, etc.

There is a remarkable ſweetneſs in the verſe which deſcribes the appearance of Mercury in the ſhape of a young man;

------Νεηνίῃ ἀνδρὶ ἐοικὼς
Πρῶτον ὑπηνήτῃ τῦ περ χαριεςάτη ἥβη.

While full of thought, revolving fates to come,
I ſpeed my paſſage to th' enchanted dome:
Arriv'd, before the lofty gates I ſtay'd;
The lofty gates the goddeſs wide diſplay'd;
She leads before, and to the feaſt invites;
I follow ſadly to the magic rites.
Radiant with ſtarry ſtuds, a ſilver ſeat
Receiv'd my limbs; a footſtool eas'd my feet.
She mix'd the potion, fraudulent of ſoul;
The poiſon mantled in the golden bowl.
I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n:
Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was giv'n.

——On his bloomy face
Youth ſmil'd celeſtial——

Virgil was ſenſible of the beauty of it, and imitated it;

Ora puer prima ſignans intonſa juventa.

But in the opinion of Macrobius, he falls ſhort of Homer, lib. 5. Saturn. 13. *Praetermiſſa gratia incipientis pubertatis* τὸ περὶ χαριεσάτη, *minus gratam fecit latinam deſcriptionem.*

℣. 379. *I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n.*] It may be aſked if Ulyſſes is not as culpable as his companions, in drinking this potion? Where lies the difference? and how is the allegory carried on, when Ulyſſes yields to the ſolicitation of Circe, that is, pleaſure, and indulges, not reſiſts his appetites? The moral of the fable is, that all pleaſure is not unlawful, but the exceſs of it: we may enjoy, provided it be with moderation. Ulyſſes does not taſte till he is fortified againſt it; whereas his companions yielded without any care or circumſpection; they indulged their appetites only, Ulyſſes takes merely out of a deſire to deliver his

Hence,

Hence, to thy fellows! (dreadful ſhe began)
Go, be a beaſt!——I heard, and yet was man.
Then ſudden whirling like a waving flame
My beamy faulchion, I aſſault the dame.
Struck with unuſual fear, ſhe trembling cries,
She faints, ſhe falls; ſhe lifts her weeping eyes.
What art thou? ſay! from whence, from whom you came?
O more than human! tell thy race, thy name.
Amazing ſtrength, theſe poiſons to ſuſtain!
Not mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain.
Or art thou he? the man to come (foretold
By Hermes pow'rful with the wand of gold)
The man from Troy, who wander'd ocean round;
The man for wiſdom's various arts renown'd,
Ulyſſes? oh! thy threat'ning fury ceaſe,
Sheath thy bright ſword, and join our hands in peace;
Let mutual joys our mutual truſt combine,
And love and love-born confidence be thine.
And how, dread Circe! (furious I rejoin)
Can love and love-born confidence be mine?
Beneath thy charms when my companions groan,
Transform'd to beaſts, with accents not their own.

aſſociates: he makes himſelf maſter of Circe, or pleaſure, and is not in the power of it, and enjoys it upon his own terms; they are ſlaves to it, and out of a capacity ever to regain their freedom but by the aſſiſtance of Ulyſſes. The general moral of the whole fable of Circe is, that pleaſure is as dreadful an enemy as danger, and a Circe as hard to be conquered as a Polypheme.

O thou of fraudful heart! ſhall I be led
To ſhare thy feaſt-rites, or aſcend thy bed;
That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent,
And magic bind me, cold and impotent?
Celeſtial as thou art, yet ſtand deny'd;
Or ſwear that oath by which the gods are ty'd,
Swear, in thy ſoul no latent frauds remain,
Swear, by the vow which never can be vain.

The goddeſs ſwore: then ſeiz'd my hand, and led,
To the ſweeet tranſports of the genial bed.
Miniſtrant to their queen, with buſy care
Four faithful handmaids the ſoft rites prepare;

℣. 403. ——— *Shall I be led*
To ſhare thy feaſt-rites.]

Euſtathius obſerves, that we have here the picture of a man truly wiſe, who when pleaſure courts him to indulge his appetites, not only knows how to abſtain, but ſuſpects it to be a bait to draw him into ſome inconveniencies: a man ſhould never think himſelf in ſecurity in the houſe of a Circe. It may be added, that theſe apprehenſions of Ulyſſes are not without a foundation; from this intercourſe with that goddeſs, Telegonus ſprung, who accidentally ſlew his father Ulyſſes.

℣. 414. *Four faithful handmaids*, etc.] This large deſcription of the entertainment in the palace of Circe is particularly judicious; Ulyſſes is in an houſe of pleaſure, and the poet dwells upon it, and ſhews how every circumſtance contributes to promote and advance it. The attendants are all nymphs, and the bath and perfumes uſher in the feaſt and wines. The four verſes that follow, are omitted by Dacier, and they are marked in Euſtathius as ſuperfluous; they are to be found in other parts of the Odyſſey; but that, I confeſs, would

Nymphs ſprung from fountains, or from ſhady woods,
Or the fair offspring of the ſacred floods.
One o'er the couches painted carpets threw,
Whoſe purple luſtre glow'd againſt the view:
White linen lay beneath. Another plac'd
The ſilver ſtands with golden flaſkets grac'd:
With dulcet bev'rage this the beaker crown'd,
Fair in the midſt, with gilded cups around:
That in the tripod o'er the kindled pyle
The water pours; the bubling waters boil:
An ample vaſe receives the ſmoking wave,
And in the bath prepar'd my limbs I leave;
Reviving ſweets repair the mind's decay,
And take the painful ſenſe of toil away.
A veſt and tunic o'er me next ſhe threw,
Freſh from the bath and dropping balmy dew;
Then led and plac'd me on the ſov'reign ſeat,
With carpets ſpread; a footſtool at my feet.
The golden ew'r a nymph obſequious brings,
Repleniſh'd from the cool, tranſlucent ſprings;
With copious water the bright vaſe ſupplies
A ſilver laver of capacious ſize.

be no argument why they ſhould not ſtand here, (ſuch repetitions being frequent in Homer) if they had a due propriety; but they contain a tautology; we ſee before a table ſpread for the entertainment of Ulyſſes, why then ſhould that circumſtance be repeated? If they are omitted, there will no chaſm or incoherence appear, and therefore probably they were not originally inſerted here by Homer.

I waſh'd. The table in fair order ſpread,
They heap the glittering caniſters with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taſte,
Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour, rich repaſte!
Circe in vain invites the feaſt to ſhare;
Abſent I ponder, and abſorpt in care:
While ſcenes of woe roſe anxious in my breaſt,
The queen beheld me, and theſe words addreſt.
Why ſits Ulyſſes ſilent and apart?
Some hoard of grief cloſe harbour'd at his heart,
Untouch'd before thee ſtand the cates divine,
And unregarded laughs the roſy wine.
Can yet a doubt, or any dread remain,
When ſworn that oath which never can be vain!
I anſwer'd; Goddeſs! humane is thy breaſt,
By juſtice ſway'd, by tender pity preſt:
Ill fits it me, whoſe friends are ſunk to beaſts,
To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feaſts.
Me wou'dſt thou pleaſe? for them thy cares imploy,
And them to me reſtore, and me to joy.
With that, ſhe parted: In her potent hand
She bore the virtue of the magic wand.
Then haſt'ning to the ſtyes ſet wide the door,
Urg'd forth, and drove the briſtly herd before;
Unwieldy, out they ruſh'd, with gen'ral cry,
Enormous beaſts diſhoneſt to the eye.
Now touch'd by counter-charms, they change agen,
And ſtand majeſtic, and recall'd to men.

Thoſe hairs of late that briſtled ev'ry part,
Fall off, miraculous effect of art:
'Till all the form in full proportion riſe,
More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.
They ſaw, they knew me, and with eager pace
Clung to their maſter in a long embrace:
Sad, pleaſing ſight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
And ſobs of joy re-echo'd thro' the bow'r:
Ev'n Circe wept, her adamantine heart
Felt pity enter, and ſuſtain'd her part.
Son of Laertes! (then the queen began)
Oh much-enduring, much-experienc'd man!
Haſte to thy veſſel on the ſea-beat ſhore,
Unload thy treaſures, and thy gally moor;
Then bring thy friends, ſecure from future harms,
And in our grotto's ſtow thy ſpoils and arms.
She ſaid. Obedient to her high command
I quit the place, and haſten to the ſtrand.
My ſad companions on the beach I found,
Their wiſtful eyes in floods of ſorrow drown'd.

V. 468. *More young——more graceful to my eyes.*] Homer excellently carries on his allegory: he intends by this expreſſion of the enlargement of the beauty of Ulyſſes's companions, to teach that men who turn from an evil courſe, into the paths of virtue, excel even themſelves; having learnt the value of virtue from the miſeries they ſuffered in purſuit of vice, they become new men, and as it were enjoy a ſecond life. Euſtathius.

As from freſh paſtures and the dewy field
(When loaded cribs their evening banquet yield)
The lowing herds return; around them throng
With leaps and bounds their late-impriſon'd young,

ỳ. 485. *As from freſh paſtures and the dewy field*, etc.] If this ſimile were to be rendered literally, it would run thus; 'as calves ſeeing the droves of cows returning at 'night when they are filled with their paſturage, run 'ſkipping out to meet them; the ſtalls no longer detain 'them, but running round their dams they fill the plain 'with their lowings, etc. If a ſimilitude of this nature were to be introduced into modern poetry, I am of opinion it would fall under ridicule for a want of delicacy: but in reality, images drawn from nature, and a rural life, have always a very good effect; in particular, this before us enlivens a melancholy deſcription of ſorrows, and ſo exactly expreſſes in every point the joy of Ulyſſes's companions, we ſee them in the very deſcription. To judge rightly of compariſons, we are not to examine if the ſubject from whence they are derived be great or little, noble or familiar, but we are principally to conſider if the image produced be clear and lively, if the poet have ſkill to dignify it by poetical words, and if it perfectly paints the thing it is intended to repreſent. This rule fully vindicates Homer, though he frequently paints low life, yet he never uſes terms which are not noble; or if he uſes humble words or phraſes, it is with ſo much art, that, as Dionyſius obſerves, they become noble and harmonious: in ſhort, a top may be uſed with propriety and elegance in a ſimilitude by a Virgil, and the ſun may be diſhonoured by a Maevius; a mean thought expreſſed in noble terms being more tolerable, than a noble thought diſgraced by mean expreſſions. Things that have an intrinſic greatneſs need only to be barely repreſented to fill the ſoul with admiration, but it ſhews the skill of a poet to raiſe a low ſubject, and exalt common appearances into dignity.

Ruſh to their mothers with unruly joy,
And echoing hills return the tender cry:
So round me preſs'd exulting at my ſight,
With cries and agonies of wild delight,
The weeping ſailors; nor leſs fierce their joy
Than if return'd to Ithaca from Troy.
Ah maſter! ever-honour'd, ever dear,
(Theſe tender words on ev'ry ſide I hear)
What other joy can equal thy return?
Not that lov'd country for whoſe ſight we mourn,
The ſoil that nurs'd us, and that gave us breath:
But ah! relate our loſt companions death.

I anſwer'd chearful. Haſte, your gally moor,
And bring our treaſures and our arms a-ſhore:
Thoſe in yon hollow caverns let us lay;
Then riſe and follow where I lead the way.
Your fellows live: believe your eyes, and come
To take the joys of Circe's ſacred dome.

With ready ſpeed the joyful crew obey:
Alone Eurylochus perſuades their ſtay.
Whither (he cry'd) ah whither will ye run?
Seek ye to meet thoſe evils ye ſhou'd ſhun?
Will you the terrors of the dome explore,
In ſwine to grovel, or in lions roar,
Or wolf-like howl away the midnight hour
In dreadful watch around the magic bow'r?
Remember Cyclops, and his bloody deed;
The leader's raſhneſs made the ſoldiers bleed.

℣. 515. *Remember Cyclops*, etc.] The poet paints Eurylochus uniformly, under great diſorder of mind and

I heard incens'd, and firſt reſolv'd to ſpeed
My flying faulchion at the rebel's head.
Dear as he was, by ties of kindred bound,
This hand had ſtretch'd him breathleſs on the ground:
But all at once my interpoſing train
For mercy pleaded, nor could plead in vain.
Leave here the man who dares his prince deſert,
Leave to repentance and his own ſad heart,
To guard the ſhip. Seek we the ſacred ſhades
Of Circe's palace, where Ulyſſes leads.

This with one voice declar'd, the riſing train
Left the black veſſel by the murm'ring main.
Shame touch'd Eurylochus his alter'd breaſt,
He fear'd my threats, and follow'd with the reſt.

Mean-while the goddeſs, with indulgent cares
And ſocial joys, the late-transform'd repairs;
The bath, the feaſt, their fainting ſoul renews;
Rich in refulgent robes, and dropping balmy dews:
Brightning with joy their eager eyes behold
Each other's face, and each his ſtory told;
Then guſhing tears the narrative confound,
And with their ſobs the vaulted roofs reſound.

terrible apprehenſions: there is no ſimilitude between Circe and Cyclops, with reſpect to the uſage of the companions of Ulyſſes; but Homer puts theſe expreſſions into his mouth, to repreſent the nature of terror, which confounds the thoughts, and conſequently diſtracts the language of a perſon who is poſſeſſed by it. The character therefore of Eurylochus is the imitation of a perſon confounded with fears, ſpeaking irrationally and incoherently. Euſtathius.

When huſh'd their paſſion, thus the goddeſs cries:
Ulyſſes, taught by labours to be wiſe,
Let this ſhort memory of grief ſuffice.
To me are known the various woes ye bore,
In ſtorms by ſea, in perils on the ſhore;
Forget whatever was in fortune's pow'r,
And ſhare the pleaſures of this genial hour.
Such be your minds as ere ye left your coaſt,
Or learn'd to ſorrow for a country loſt.
Exiles and wand'rers now, where-e'er ye go,
Too faithful memory renews your woe;
The cauſe remov'd, habitual griefs remain,
And the ſoul ſaddens by the uſe of pain.
  Her kind intreaty mov'd the gen'ral breaſt;
Tir'd with long toil, we willing ſunk to reſt.
We ply'd the banquet and the bowl we crown'd,
'Till the full circle of the year came round.
But when the ſeaſons, following in their train,
Brought back the months, the days, and hours again;
As from a lethargy at once they riſe,
And urge their chief with animating cries.
  Is this, Ulyſſes, our inglorious lot?
And is the name of Ithaca forgot?
Shall never the dear land in proſpect riſe,
Or the lov'd palace glitter in our eyes?
  Melting I heard; yet till the ſun's decline
Prolong'd the feaſt, and quaff'd the roſy wine:
But when the ſhades came on at evening hour,
And all lay ſlumbring in the duſky bow'r;

I came a ſuppliant to fair Circe's bed,
The tender moment ſeiz'd, and thus I ſaid.
Be mindful, goddeſs, of thy promiſe made;
Muſt ſad Ulyſſes ever be delay'd?
Around their lord my ſad companions mourn,
Each breaſt beats homeward, anxious to return:
If but a moment parted from thy eyes,
Their tears flow round me, and my heart complies.
Go then, (ſhe cry'd) ah go! yet think, not I,
Not Circe, but the fates your wiſh deny.
Ah hope not yet to breathe thy native air!
Far other journey firſt demands thy care;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
And view the realms of darkneſs and of death.

ỳ. 579. *Far other journey*———
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath.

There ſhould in all the epiſodes of epic poetry appear a convenience, if not a neceſſity of every incident; it may therefore be aſked what neceſſity there is for this deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell, to conſult the ſhade of Tireſias? Could not Circe, who was a goddeſs, diſcover to him all the future contingencies of his life? Euſtathius excellently anſwers this objection; Circe declares to Ulyſſes the neceſſity of conſulting Tireſias, that he may learn from the mouth of that prophet, that his death was to be from the Ocean; ſhe acts thus in order to diſpoſe him to ſtay with her, after his return from the regions of the dead: or if ſhe cannot perſuade him to ſtay with her, that ſhe may at leaſt ſecure him from returning to her rival Calypſo; ſhe had promiſed him immortality, but by this deſcent, he will learn that it is decreed that he ſhould receive his death from the Ocean; for he died by the bone of a ſea fiſh called Xi-

There ſeek the Theban bard, depriv'd of ſight,
Within, irradiate with prophetic light;
To whom Perſephone, entire and whole,
Gave to retain th'unſeparated ſoul:

phias. Her love for Ulyſſes induces her not to make the diſcovery herſelf, for it was evident ſhe would not find credit, but Ulyſſes would impute it to her love, and the deſire ſhe had to deter him from leaving her iſland. This will appear more probable, if we obſerve the conduct of Circe in the future parts of the Odyſſey: ſhe relates to him the dangers of Scylla and Charybdis, of the oxen of Phœbus, and the Sirens; but ſays nothing concerning his death: this likewiſe gives an air of probability to the relation. The iſle of Circe was adjoining to Scylla and Charybdis, etc. and conſequently ſhe may be ſuppoſed to be acquainted with thoſe places, and give an account of them to Ulyſſes with exactneſs, but ſhe leaves the decrees of heaven and the fate of Ulyſſes to the narration of the prophet, it beſt ſuiting his character to ſee into futurity. By the deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell may be ſignified, that a wiſe man ought to be ignorant of nothing; that he ought to aſcend in thought into heaven, and underſtand the heavenly appearances, and be acquainted with what is contained in the bowels of the earth, and bring to light the ſecrets of nature: that he ought to know the nature of the ſoul, what it ſuffers, and how it acts after it is ſeparated from the body. Euſtathius.

℣. 584. *To whom Perſephone*, etc.] Homer here gives the reaſon why Tireſias ſhould be conſulted, rather than any other ghoſt, becauſe

Τῷ τε φρενὲς ἔμπεδοί εἰσι.

This expreſſion is fully explained, and the notion of the ſoul after death, which prevailed among the ancients, is ſet in a clear light, verſe 92, and 122, of the 23d

The reſt are forms of empty aether made,
Impaſſive ſemblance, and a flitting ſhade.

book of the Iliads, to which paſſages I refer the readers. But whence had Tireſias this privilege above the reſt of the dead? Callimachus aſcribes it to Minerva.

Καὶ μόνος εὖτε θάνῃ, πεπνυμένος ἐν νεκύεσσι
Φοιτάσει, μεγάλῳ τίμιος ἀγεσίλᾳ.

Tully mentions this pre-eminence of Tireſias in his firſt book of Divination. Perhaps the whole fiction may ariſe from his great reputation among the ancients for prophecy; and in honour to his memory they might imagine that his ſoul after death retained the ſame ſuperiority. Ovid in his Metamorphoſes gives us a very jocular reaſon for the blindneſs and prophetic knowlege of Tireſias, from a matrimonial conteſt between Jupiter and Juno. Cato Major, as Plutarch in his Political Precepts informs us, applied this verſe to Scipio, when he was made conſul contrary to the Roman ſtatutes.

Ὀιὸς πέπνυται, τοὶ δὲ σκιαὶ ἀίσσουσιν.

But I ought not to ſuppreſs what Diodorus Siculus relates concerning Tireſias. Bibl. lib. 4. he tells us, that he had a daughter named Daphne, a prieſteſs at Delphi. Παρ' ἧς φασὶ καὶ τὸν ποιητὴν Ὅμηρον πολλὰ τῶν ἐπῶν σφετρισάμενον, κοσμῆσαι τὴν ἰδίαν ποίησιν. That is, 'From whom it is ſaid, that the poet 'Homer received many (of the Sibyls) verſes, and a-'dorned his own poetry with them. If this be true, there lay a debt of gratitude upon Homer, and he pays it honourably, by this diſtinguiſhing character, which he gives to the father. An inſtance of a worthy diſpoſition in the poet, and it remains at once an honour to Tireſias, and a monument of his own gratitude.

This deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell has a very happy effect, it gives Homer an opportunity to embelliſh his poetry with an admirable variety, and to inſert fables.

Struck

Struck at the word, my very heart was dead;
Penſive I ſate; my tears bedew'd the bed;
To hate the light and life my ſoul begun,
And ſaw that all was grief beneath the ſun.
Compos'd at length, the guſhing tears ſuppreſt,
And my toſt limbs now weary'd into reſt,
How ſhall I tread (I cry'd) ah Circe! ſay,
The dark deſcent, and who ſhall guide the way?
Can living eyes behold the realms below?
What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow?
Thy fated road (the magic pow'r reply'd)
Divine Ulyſſes! aſks no mortal guide.
Rear but the maſt, the ſpacious ſail diſplay,
The northern winds ſhall wing thee on thy way.
Soon ſhalt thou reach old Ocean's utmoſt ends,
Where to the main the ſhelving ſhore deſcends;

and hiſtories that at once inſtruct and delight. It is particularly happy with reſpect to the Phaeacians, who could not but highly admire a perſon whoſe wiſdom had not only delivered him from ſo many perils on earth, but had been permitted by the gods to ſee the regions of the dead, and return among the living; this relation could not fail of pleaſing an audience, delighted with ſtrange ſtories, and extraordinary adventures.

℣. 602. *Soon ſhalt thou reach old Ocean's utmoſt ends*, etc.] This whole ſcene is excellently imagined by the poet, as Euſtathius obſerves: the trees are all barren, the place is upon the ſhores where nothing grows; and all the rivers are of a melancholy ſignification, ſuitable to the ideas we have of thoſe infernal regions. Ulyſſes arrives at this place, where he calls up the ſhades of the dead, in the ſpace of one day; from whence we

The barren trees of Proſerpine's black woods,
Poplars and willows trembling o'er the floods: 605

may conjecture, that he means a place that lies between Cumae and Baiae, near the lake Avernus, in Italy; which, as Strabo remarks, is the ſcene of the necromancy of Homer, according to the opinion of antiquity. He further adds, that there really are ſuch rivers as Homer mentions, though not placed in their true ſituation, according to the liberty allowable to poetry. Others write, that the Cimmerii once inhabited Italy, and that the famous cave of Pauſilipe was begun by them about the time of the Trojan wars: here they offered ſacrifice to the Manes, which might give occaſion to Homer's fiction. The Grecians, who inhabited theſe places after the Cimmerians, converted theſe dark habitations into ſtoves, baths, etc.

Silius Italicus writes, that the Lucrine lake was antiently called Cocytus, lib. 12.

Aſt hic Lucrino manſiſſe vocabula quondam
Cocyti memorat.———

It is alſo probable, that Acheron was the antient name of Avernus, becauſe Acheruſia, a large water near Cunae, flows into it by concealed paſſages. Silius Italicus informs us, that Avernus was alſo called Styx.

Ille olim populis dictum Styga, nomine verſo,
Stagna inter celebrem nunc mitia monſtrat Avernum.

Here Hannibal offered ſacrifice to the Manes, as it is recorded by Livy; and Tully affirms it from an ancient poet, from whom he quotes the following fragment;

Inde in vicinia noſtra Averni lacus
Unde animae excitantur obſcura umbra,
Alti Acherontis aperto oſtio.

There fix thy veſſel in the lonely bay,
And enter there the kingdoms void of day:

This may ſeem to juſtify the obſervation that Acheron was once the name of Avernus, though the words are capable of a different interpretation.

If theſe remarks be true, it is probable that Homer does not neglect geography, as moſt commentators judge. Virgil deſcribes Æneas deſcending into hell by Avernus, after the example of Homer. Milton places theſe rivers in hell, and beautifully deſcribes their natures, in his Paradiſe Loſt.

——Along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that diſgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful ſtreams,
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron, of ſorrow, black and deep:
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the ruful ſtream: fierce Phlegeton,
Whoſe waves of torrent fire inflame with rage;
Far off from theſe a ſlow and ſilent ſtream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watry labyrinth, whereof who drinks
Forthwith his former ſtate and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleaſure and pain.

Thus alſo agreeably to the idea of hell the offerings to the infernal powers are all black, the Cimmerians lie in a land of darkneſs; the heifer which Ulyſſes is to offer is barren, like that in Virgil.

——Sterilemque tibi Proſerpina, vaccam;

to denote that the grave is unfruitful, that it devours all things, that it is a place where all things are forgotten.

Where Phlegeton's loud torrents ruſhing down,
Hiſs in the flaming gulph of Acheron;
And where, ſlow rolling from the Stygian bed,
Cocytus' lamentable waters ſpread:
Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
And mingling ſtreams eternal murmurs make.
Firſt draw thy faulchion, and on ev'ry ſide
Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide:
To all the ſhades around libations pour,
And o'er th' ingredients ſtrow the hallow'd flour:
New wine and milk, with honey temper'd, bring,
And living water from the cryſtal ſpring.
Then the wan ſhades and feeble ghoſts implore,
With promis'd off'rings on thy native ſhore;
A barren cow, the ſtatelieſt of the iſle,
And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pyle:
Theſe to the reſt; but to the Seer muſt bleed
A ſable ram, the pride of all thy breed.
Theſe ſolemn vows and holy offerings paid
To all the phantom-nations of the dead;
Be next thy care the ſable ſheep to place
Full o'er the pit, and hell-ward turn their face:
But from the infernal rite thine eye withdraw,
And back to Ocean glance with rev'rend awe.
Sudden ſhall ſkim along the duſky glades
Thin airy ſhoals, and viſionary ſhades.
Then give command the ſacrifice to haſte,
Let the flea'd victims in the flames be caſt,

And ſacred vows, and myſtic ſong, apply'd
To griſly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.
Wide o'er the pool thy faulchion wav'd around
Shall drive the ſpectres from forbidden ground:
The ſacred draught ſhall all the dead forbear,
'Till awful from the ſhades ariſe the Seer,
Let him, Oraculous, the end, the way,
The turns of all thy future fate, diſplay,
Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day.
So ſpeaking, from the ruddy orient ſhone
The morn conſpicuous on her golden throne,
The goddeſs with a radiant tunic dreſt
My limbs, and o'er me caſt a ſilken veſt.
Long flowing robes of pureſt white array
The nymph, that added luſtre to the day:
A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold;
Her waſte was circled with a zone of gold.
Forth iſſuing then, from place to place I flew;
Rouze man by man, and animate my crew.
Riſe, riſe my mates! 'tis Circe gives command:
Our journey calls us; haſte, and quit the land.
All riſe and follow, yet depart not all,
For fate decreed one wretched man to fall.
A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd,
Nor much for ſenſe, nor much for courage fam'd;

℣. 659. *A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd.*] Homer diſmiſſes not the deſcription of this houſe of pleaſure and debauch, without ſhewing the moral of his fable, which is the ill conſequences that attend thoſe who

The youngeſt of our band, a vulgar ſoul
Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl.
He, hot and careleſs, on a turret's height
With ſleep repair'd the long debauch of night:
The ſudden tumult ſtirr'd him where he lay,
And down he haſten'd, but forgot the way;
Full endlong from the roof the ſleeper fell,
And ſnap'd the ſpinal joint, and wak'd in hell.

indulge themſelves in ſenſuality; this is ſet forth in the puniſhment of Elpenor. He deſcribes him as a perſon of no worth, to ſhew that debauchery enervates our faculties, and renders both the mind and body incapable of thinking, or acting with greatneſs and bravery. At the ſame time theſe circumſtantial relations are not without a good effect; for they render the ſtory probable, as if it were ſpoken with the veracity of an hiſtory, not the liberty of poetry.

I will conclude this book with a paragraph from Plutarch's Morals: it is a piece of advice to the fair ſex, drawn from the ſtory of Circe and Ulyſſes. 'They 'who bait their hooks (ſays this philoſopher) with in-'toxicated drugs may catch fiſh with little trouble; but 'then they prove dangerous to eat, and unpleaſant to 'the taſte: thus women who uſe arts to enſnare their 'admirers, become wives of fools and madmen: they 'whom the ſorcereſs Circe enchanted, were no better 'than brutes; and ſhe uſed them accordingly, encloſ-'ing them with ſtyes; but ſhe lov'd Ulyſſes intirely, 'whoſe prudence avoided her intoxications, and made 'his converſation agreeable. Thoſe women who will 'not believe that Paſiphae was ever enamoured of a 'bull, are yet themſelves ſo extravagant, as to abandon 'the ſociety of men of ſenſe and temperance, and to be-'take themſelves to the embraces of brutal and ſtupid 'fellows.' Plut. Conjugal Precepts.

The reſt croud round me with an eager look;
I met them with a ſigh, and thus beſpoke.
Already, friends! ye think your toils are o'er,
Your hopes already touch your native ſhore:
Alas! far otherwiſe the nymph declares,
Far other journey firſt demands our cares;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
The dreary realms of darkneſs and of death:
To ſeek Tireſias' awful ſhade below,
And thence our fortunes and our fates to know.
My ſad companions heard in deep deſpair;
Frantic they tore their manly growth of hair;
To earth they fell; the tears began to rain;
But tears in mortal miſeries are vain.
Sadly they far'd along the ſea-beat ſhore;
Still heav'd their hearts, and ſtill their eyes ran o'er.
The ready victims at our bark we found,
The ſable ewe, and ram, together bound.
For ſwift as thought, the goddeſs had been there,
And thence had glided, viewleſs as the air:
The paths of gods what mortal can ſurvey?
Who eyes their motion, who ſhall trace their way?

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The deſcent into hell.

Ulyſſes continues his narration, how he arrived at the land of the Cimmerians, and what ceremonies he performed to invoke the dead. The manner of his deſcent, and the apparition of the ſhades: his converſation with Elpenor, and with Tireſias, who informs him in a prophetic manner of his fortunes to come. He meets his mother Anticlea, from whom he learns the ſtate of his family. He ſees the ſhades of the ancient Heroines, afterwards of the Heroes, and converſes in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a ſullen diſtance, and diſdains to anſwer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Syſiphus, Hercules: 'till he is deterred from further curioſity by the apparition of horrid ſpectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.

NOW to the ſhores we bend, a mournful train,
Climb the tall bark, and launch into the main:
At once the maſt we rear, at once unbind
The ſpacious ſheet, and ſtretch it to the wind:

The ancients called this book Νεκυομαντεία, or Νεκύα, the book of Necromancy: becauſe (ſays Euſtathius) it contains an interview between Ulyſſes and the ſhades of the dead.

Virgil has not only borrowed the general deſign from

Then pale and penſive ſtand, with cares oppreſt,
And ſolemn horror ſaddens every breaſt.

Homer, but imitated many particular incidents: L'Abbe Fraguier in the Memoirs of Literature gives his judgment in favour of the Roman poet, and juſtly obſerves, that the end and deſign of the journey is more important in Virgil than in Homer. Ulyſſes deſcends to conſult Tireſias, Æneas his father. Ulyſſes takes a review of the ſhades of celebrated perſons that preceded his times, or whom he knew at Troy, who have no relation to the ſtory of the Odyſſey: Æneas receives the hiſtory of his own poſterity; his father inſtructs him how to manage the Italian war, and how to conclude it with honour; that is, to lay the foundations of the greateſt empire in the world; and the poet by a very happy addreſs takes an opportunity to pay a noble compliment to his patron Auguſtus. In the Æneid there is a magnificent deſcription of the deſcent and enterance into hell; and the diſeaſes, cares and terrors that Æneas ſees in his journey, are very happily imagined, as an introduction into the regions of death: whereas in Homer there is nothing ſo noble, we ſcarce are able to diſcover the place where the poet lays his ſcene, or whether Ulyſſes continues below or above the ground. Inſtead of a deſcent into hell, it ſeems rather a conjuring up, or an evocation of the dead from hell; according to the words of Horace, who undoubtedly had this paſſage of Homer in his thoughts. Satyr. 8. lib. 1.

———*Scalpere terram*
Unguibus, et pullam divellere mordicus agnam
Coeperunt; cruor in foſſam confuſus, ut inde
Manes elicerent, *animas reſponſa daturas.*

But if it be underſtood of an evocation only, how ſhall we account for ſeveral viſions and deſcriptions in the concluſion of this book? Ulyſſes ſees Tantalus in the

A freſhning breeze the magic * pow'r ſupply'd,
While the wing'd veſſel flew along the tyde;

* Circe.

waters of hell, and Siſyphus rowling a ſtone up an infernal mountain; theſe Ulyſſes could not conjure up, and conſequently muſt be ſuppoſed to have entered at leaſt the borders of thoſe infernal regions. In ſhort, Fraguier is of opinion, that Virgil profited more by the Frogs of Ariſtophanes than by Homer: and Mr. Dryden prefers the ſixth book of the Æneid to the eleventh of the Odyſſey, I think with very great reaſon.'

I will take the opportunity briefly to mention the original of all theſe fictions of infernal rivers, judges, etc. ſpoken of by Homer, and repeated and enlarged by Virgil. They are of Ægyptian extract, as Mr. Sandys (that faithful traveller, and judicious poet) obſerves, ſpeaking of the Mummies of Memphis, p. 134.

'Theſe ceremonies performed, they laid the corps in 'a boat to be waſted over Acheruſia, a lake on the ſouth 'of Memphis, by one only perſon, whom they called 'Charon; which gave Orpheus the invention of his in-'fernal ferriman; an ill-favoured ſlovenly fellow, as 'Virgil deſcribes him, Æneid 6. About this lake ſtood 'the ſhady temple of Hecate, with the ports of Cocytus 'and Oblivion, ſeparated by bars of braſs, the original 'of like fables. When landed on the other ſide, the 'bodies were brought before certain judges; if convinc-'ed of an evil life, they were deprived of burial; if o-'therwiſe, they ſuffered them to be interred.' This explication ſhews the foundation of thoſe antient fables of Charon, Rhadamanthus, etc. And alſo that the poets had a regard to truth in their inventions, and grounded even their fables upon ſome remarkable cuſtoms, which grew obſcure and abſurd only becauſe the memory of the cuſtoms to which they allude is loſt to poſterity.

Our oars we ſhipp'd: all day the ſwelling ſails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales.
Now ſunk the ſun from his aerial height,
And o'er the ſhaded billows ruſh'd the night:
When lo! we reach'd old Ocean's utmoſt bounds,
Where rocks controul his waves with ever-during mounds.

I will only add from Dacier, that this book is an evidence of the antiquity of the opinion of the ſoul's immortality. It is upon this that the moſt ancient of all divinations was founded, I mean that which was performed by the evocation of the dead. There is a very remarkable inſtance of this in the holy ſcriptures, in an age not very diſtant from that of Homer. Saul conſults one of theſe infernal agents to call up Samuel, who appears, or ſome evil ſpirit in his form, and predicts his impending death and calamities. This is a pregnant inſtance of the antiquity of Necromancy, and that it was not of Homer's invention; it prevailed long before his days among the Chaldeans, and ſpread over all the oriental world. Æſchylus has a tragedy intitled Perſae, in which the ſhade of Darius is called up, like that of Samuel, and fortells queen Atoſſa all her misfortunes. Thus it appears that there was a foundation for what Homer writes; he only embelliſhes the opinions of antiquity with the ornaments of poetry.

I muſt confeſs that Homer gives a miſerable account of a future ſtate; there is not a perſon deſcribed in happineſs, unleſs perhaps it be Tireſias: the good and the bad ſeem all in the ſame condition: whereas Virgil has an hell for the wicked, and an Elyſium for the juſt. Though perhaps it may be a vindication of Homer to ſay, that the notions of Virgil of a future ſtate were different from thoſe of Homer; according to whom hell might only be a receptacle for the vehicles of the dead, and that while they were in hell, their φρὴν or ſpirit

There

There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells, 15
The duſky nation of Cimmeria dwells:

might be in heaven, as appears from what is ſaid of the εἴδωλον of Hercules in this 11th book of the Odyſſey.

℣. 15. *There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,*
The duſky nation of Cimmeria dwells.

It is the opinion of many commentators, that Homer conſtantly in theſe voyages of Ulyſſes makes uſe of a fabulous geography; but perhaps the contrary opinion in many places may be true: in this paſſage, Ulyſſes in the ſpace of one day ſails from the iſland of Circe to the Cimmerians: now it is very evident from Herodotus and Strabo, that they inhabited the regions near the Boſphorus, and conſequently Ulyſſes could not ſail thither in the compaſs of a day; and therefore, ſays Strabo, the poet removes not only the Cimmerians, but their climate and darkneſs, from the northern Boſphorus into Campania in Italy.

But that there really were a people in Italy named Cimmerians is evident from the teſtimony of many authors. So Lycophron plainly underſtands this paſſage, and relates theſe adventures as performed in Italy. He recapitulates all the voyages of Ulyſſes, and mentioning the deſcent into hell and the Cimmerians, he immediately deſcribes the infernal rivers, and adds, (ſpeaking of the Apennine,)

Ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα χύτλα, καὶ πᾶσαι μυχῶν
Πηγαὶ, κατ' Ἀυσονῖτιν ἔλκονται χθόνα.

That is, 'From whence all the rivers, and all the foun-'tains flow through the regions of Italy.' And theſe lines of Tibullus,

Cimmerion etiam obſcuras acceſſit ad arces,
Queis nunquam candente dies apparuit ortu,
Sive ſupra terras Phoebus, ſeu curreret infra,

The ſun ne'er views th' uncomfortable ſeats,
When radiant he advances, or retreats:
Unhappy race! whom endleſs night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in ſhades.
The ſhip we moor on theſe obſcure abodes;
Diſ-bark the ſheep, an offering to the gods;
And hell-ward bending, o'er the beach deſcry
The doleſome paſſage to th' infernal ſky.
The victims, vow'd to each Tartarean pow'r,
Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.
Here open'd hell, all hell I here implor'd,
And from the ſcabbard drew the ſhining ſword;
And trenching the black earth on ev'ry ſide,
A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide.

are underſtood by all interpreters to denote the Italian Cimmerians, who dwelt near Baiae and the lake Avernus; and therefore Homer may be imagined not entirely to follow a fabulous geography. It is evident from Herodotus that theſe Cimmerians were antiently a powerful nation; for paſſing into Aſia (ſays that author in his Clio) they poſſeſſed themſelves of Sardis, in the time of Ardyes, the ſon of Gyges. If ſo, it is poſſible they might make ſeveral ſettlements in different parts of the world, and call thoſe ſettlements by their original name, Cimmerians, and conſequently there might be Italian, as well as Scythian Cimmerians.

It muſt be allowed, that this horrid region is well choſen for the deſcent into hell: it is deſcribed as a land of obſcurity and horrors, and happily imagined to introduce a relation concerning the realms of death and darkneſs.

Now wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
Then living waters from the cryſtal ſpring;
O'er theſe was ſtrow'd the conſecrated flour,
And on the ſurface ſhone the holy ſtore.

Now the wan ſhades we hail, th' infernal gods,
To ſpeed our courſe, and waft us o'er the floods:

℣. 31. *New wine, with honey-temper'd milk.*] The word in the original is, μελικρατον, which (as Euſtathius obſerves) the antients conſtantly underſtood to imply a mixture of honey and milk; but all writers who ſucceeded Homer as conſtantly uſed it to ſignify a compoſition of water mixed with honey. The Latin poets have borrowed their magical rites from Homer: thus Ovid. Metam. 7. 243.

Hand procul egeſta ſcrobibus tellure duabus
Sacra facit: cultroſque in guttura velleris atri
Conjicit; et patulas perfundit ſanguine foſſas,
Tum ſuper invergens liquidi carcheſia Bacchi,
Æneaque invergens tepidi carcheſia lactis, etc.

Thus alſo Statius:

———*Tellure cavata*
Inclinat Bacchi latices, et munera verni,
Lactis, et Actaeos imbres, etc.

This libation is made to all the departed ſhades; but to what purpoſe (objects Euſtathius) ſhould theſe rites be paid to the dead, when it is evident from the ſubſequent relation that they were ignorant of theſe ceremonies till they had taſted the libation? He anſwers from the antients, that they were merely honorary to the regents of the dead, Pluto and Proſerpina; and uſed to obtain their leave to have an interview with the ſhades in their dominions.

So ſhall a barren heifer from the ſtall
Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
So in our palace, at our ſafe return
Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pyle ſhall burn;
So ſhall a ram, the largeſt of the breed,
Black as theſe regions, to Tireſias bleed.
Thus ſolemn rites and holy vows we paid
To all the phantom nations of the dead.
Then dy'd the ſheep; a purple torrent flow'd,
And all the cavern ſmok'd with ſtreaming blood.
When lo! appear'd along the duſky coaſts,
Thin, airy ſhoals of viſionary ghoſts;

ỳ. 47. *When lo! appear'd along the duſky coaſts,*
Thin, airy ſhoals of viſionary ghoſts.]

We are informed by Euſtathius, that the antients rejected theſe ſix verſes; for, ſay they, theſe are not the ſhades of perſons newly ſlain, but who have long been in theſe infernal regions: how then can their wounds be ſuppoſed ſtill to be viſible, eſpecially through their armour, when the ſoul was ſeparated from the body? Neither is this the proper place for their appearance, for the poet immediately ſubjoins, that the ghoſt of Elpenor was the firſt that he encountered in theſe regions of darkneſs. But theſe objections will be eaſily anſwered by having recourſe to the notions which the antients entertained concerning the dead; we muſt remember that they imagined that the ſoul, though freed from the body, had ſtill a vehicle, exactly reſembling the body; as the figure in a mold retains the reſemblance of the mold, when ſeparated from it; the body is but as a caſe to this vehicle, and it is in this vehicle that the wounds are ſaid to be viſible; this was ſuppoſed to be leſs groſs than the mortal body, and leſs ſubtile than the ſoul; ſo

Fair, penſive youths, and ſoft enamour'd maids,
And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled ſhades;

that whatever wounds the outward body received when living, were believed to affect this inward ſubſtance, and conſequently might be viſible after ſeparation.

It is true that the poet calls the ghoſt of Elpenor the firſt ghoſt, but this means the firſt whom he knew: Elpenor was not yet buried, and therefore was not yet received into the habitation of the dead, but wanders before the enterance of it. This is the reaſon why his ſhade is ſaid to preſent itſelf the foremoſt; it comes not up from the realm of death, but deſcends towards it from the upper world.

But theſe ſhades of the warriors are ſaid ſtill to wear their armour in which they were ſlain, for the poet adds that it was ſtained with blood: how is it poſſible for theſe ghoſts, which are only a ſubtle ſubſtance, not a groſs body, to wear the armour they wore in the other world? How was it conveyed to them in theſe infernal regions? All that occurs to me in anſwer to this objection is, that the poet deſcribes them ſuitably to the characters they bore in life; the warriors on earth are warriors in hell; and that he adds theſe circumſtances only to denote the manner of their death, which was in battle, or by the ſword. No doubt but Homer repreſents a future ſtate according to the notions which his age entertained of it, and this ſufficiently juſtifies him as a poet, who is not obliged to write truths, but according to fame and common opinions.

But to prove theſe verſes genuine, we have the authority of Virgil: he was too ſenſible of their beauty not to adorn his poems with them. Georg. 4. 470.

At cantu commotae Erebi de ſedibus imis
Umbrae ibant tenues, ſimulacraque luce carentum,
Matres, atque viri, defunctaque corpora vita

Ghaſtly with wounds the forms of warriors ſlain
Stalk'd with majeſtic port, a martial train:
Theſe and a thouſand more ſwarm'd o'er the ground,
And all the dire aſſembly ſhriek'd around.
Aſtoniſh'd at the ſight, aghaſt I ſtood,
And a cold fear ran ſhivering through my blood;
Strait I command the ſacrifice to haſte,
Strait the ſlea'd victims to the flames are caſt,
And mutter'd vows, and myſtic ſong apply'd
To griſly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.

Now ſwift I wav'd my faulchion o'er the blood;
Back ſtarted the pale throngs, and trembling ſtood.
Round the black trench the gore untaſted flows,
'Till awful from the ſhades Tireſias roſe.
There, wand'ring thro' the gloom I firſt ſurvey'd,
New to the realms of death, Elpenor's ſhade:
His cold remains all naked to the ſky
On diſtant ſhores unwept, unburied lie.

Magnanimum heroum, pueri, innuptaeque puellae,
Impoſitique rogis juvenes, etc.

It muſt be confeſſed that this Roman poet omits the circumſtance of the armour in his tranſlation, as being perhaps contrary to the opinions prevailing in his age; but in the ſixth book he deſcribes his heroes with arms, horſes, and infernal chariots, and in the ſtory of Deiphobus we ſee his ſhade retain the wounds in hell, which he received at the time of his death in Troy.

——*Lacerum crudeliter ora*
Deiphobum vidi, etc.

Sad at the ſight I ſtand, deep fix'd in woe,
And ere I ſpoke the tears began to flow.
O ſay what angry pow'r Elpenor led
To glide in ſhades, and wander with the dead?
How could thy ſoul, by realms and ſeas disjoin'd,
Out-fly the nimble ſail, and leave the lagging wind?

℣. 73. *How could thy ſoul, by realms and ſeas disjoin'd,*
Out-fly the nimble ſail?

Euſtathius is of opinion, that Ulyſſes ſpeaks pleaſantly to Elpenor, for were his words to be literally tranſlated they would be, Elpenor, *thou art come hither on foot, ſooner than I in a ſhip.* I ſuppoſe it is the worthleſs character of Elpenor that led that critic into this opinion; but I ſhould rather take the ſentence to be ſpoken ſeriouſly, not only becauſe ſuch railleries are an inſult upon the unfortunate, and levities perhaps unworthy of epic poetry, but alſo from the general conduct of Ulyſſes, who at the ſight of Elpenor burſts into tears, and compaſſionates the fate of his friend. Is there any thing in this that looks like raillery? if there be, we muſt confeſs that Ulyſſes makes a very quick tranſition from ſorrow to pleaſantry. The other is a more noble ſenſe, and therefore I have followed it, and it excellently paints the ſurprize of Ulyſſes at the unexpected ſight of Elpenor, and expreſſes his wonder that the ſoul, the moment it leaves the body, ſhould reach the receptacle of departed ſhades.

But it may be aſked, what connexion this ſtory of Elpenor has to the ſubject of the poem, and what it contributes to the end of it? Boſſu very well anſwers, that the poet may inſert ſome incidents that make no part of the fable or action; eſpecially if they be ſhort, and break not the thread of it: this before us is only a ſmall part of a large epiſode, which the poet was at liberty to inſert or omit, as contributed moſt to the beauty of his

The ghoſt reply'd: To hell my doom I owe,
Daemons accurſt, dire miniſters of woe!

poetry: beſides, it contains an excellent moral, and ſhews us the ill effects of drunkenneſs and debauchery. The poet repreſents Elpenor as a perſon of a mean character, and puniſhes his crime with ſudden death, and diſhonour.

I will only add that Virgil treads in the footſteps of Homer; and Miſenus, in the Æneid, is the Elpenor of the Odyſſey: there is indeed ſome difference; Miſenus ſuffers for his preſumption, Elpenor for his debauchery.

ỳ. 75.——*To hell my doom I owe,*
Daemons accurſt, dire miniſters of woe.]

The words in the original are, Ἀσέ μ᾽ Δαίμονος αἶσα. The identity of ſound in ἆσε and αἶσα may perhaps appear a little inharmonious, and ſhock the ear. It is a known obſervation that the nice ears in the court of Auguſtus could not pardon Virgil for a like ſimilitude of cadence in this verſe.

At regina Pyra——

But theſe are rather negligencies than errors; they are indeed to be avoided, but a great genius ſometimes overlooks ſuch niceties, and ſacrifices ſound to ſenſe.

The words of Quintilian are very appoſite to this purpoſe, lib. 8. cap. 3. *Ejuſdem verbi aut ſermonis iteratio, quanquam non magnopere ſummis auctoribus vitata, interim vitium videri poteſt; in quod ſaepe incidit etiam Cicero, ſecurus tam parvae obſervationis.* He brings an inſtance of it from his oration for Cluentius, *Non ſolum igitur illud judicium, judicii ſimile, judices, non fuit.* It muſt be confeſſed, that the ſenſe is not only darkened, but the ear ſhocked at the repetition of the ſame word in the ſame period.

This is a very pregnant inſtance, that the opinion of an evil Daemon or genius prevailed in the days of Ho-

My feet thro' wine unfaithful to their weight,
Betray'd me tumbling from a tow'ry height,
Stagg'ring I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
Lux'd the neck joint——my ſoul deſcends to hell.
But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend,
By the ſoft tye and ſacred name of friend!
By thy fond comfort! by thy father's cares!
By lov'd Telemachus his blooming years!
For well I know that ſoon the heavenly pow'rs
Will give thee back to-day, and Circe's ſhores:
There pious on my cold remains attend,
There call to mind thy poor departed friend,
The tribute of a tear is all I crave,
And the poſſeſſion of a peaceful grave.
But if unheard, in vain compaſſion plead,
Revere the gods, the gods avenge the dead!
A tomb along the wat'ry margin raiſe,
The tomb with manly arms and trophies grace,
To ſhew poſterity Elpenor was.

mer: but this excuſe of Elpenor, in aſcribing his calamity to a Daemon, gives great offence to Maximus Tyrius, he being a Stoic philoſopher. He ſays Elpenor is guilty of falſehood in this excuſe to Ulyſſes: for *Daemons, parcae.* etc. are nothing but the idle pretext of wicked men, who are induſtrious to transfer their own follies to the gods, according to thoſe verſes in the beginning of the Odyſſey.

Why charge mankind on heav'n their own offence,
And call their woes the crime of providence?
Blind! who themſelves their miſeries create,
And periſh by their folly, not their fate.

There high in air, memorial of my name
Fix the ſmooth oar, and bid me live to fame.

To whom with tears; Theſe rites, oh mournful ſhade,
Due to thy ghoſt, ſhall to thy ghoſt be paid.

Still as I ſpoke the phantom ſeem'd to moan,
Tear follow'd tear, and groan ſucceeded groan.
But as my waving ſword the blood ſurrounds,
The ſhade withdrew, and mutter'd empty ſounds.

There as the wond'rous viſions I ſurvey'd,
All pale aſcends my royal mother's ſhade:

ỳ. 105. *All pale aſcends my royal mother's ſhade.*] The behaviour of Ulyſſes with reſpect to his mother may appear not ſufficiently tender and affectionate; he refrains all manner of addreſs to her, a conduct which may be cenſured as inconſiſtent with filial piety; but Plutarch very fully anſwers this objection. It is (ſays that author) a remarkable inſtance of the prudence of Ulyſſes, 'who, deſcending into the regions of the dead, refuſed 'all conference even with his mother, 'till he had obtained an anſwer from Tireſias, concerning the buſineſs 'which induced him to undertake that infernal journey.' A wiſe man is not inquiſitive about things impertinent; accordingly Ulyſſes firſt ſhews himſelf a wiſe man, and then a dutiful ſon. Beſides, it is very judicious in Homer thus to deſcribe Ulyſſes: the whole deſign of the Odyſſey is the return of Ulyſſes to his country; this is the mark at which the heroe ſhould continually aim, and therefore it is neceſſary that all other incidents ſhould be ſubordinate to this; and the poet had been blameable if he had ſhewed Ulyſſes entertaining himſelf with amuſements, and poſtponing the conſiderations of the chief deſign of the Odyſſey. Lucian ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe in his piece upon aſtrology.

A queen, to Troy ſhe ſaw our legions paſs;
Now a thin form is all Anticlea was!
Struck at the ſight I melt with filial woe,
And down my cheek the pious ſorrows flow,
Yet as I ſhook my faulchion o'er the blood,
Regardleſs of her ſon the parent ſtood.

When lo! the mighty Theban I behold;
To guide his ſteps he bore a ſtaff of gold;
Awful he trod! majeſtic was his look!
And from his holy lips theſe accents broke.

Why, mortal, wand'reſt thou from chearful day,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
What angry gods to theſe dark regions led
Thee yet alive, companion of the dead?
But ſheath thy ponyard, while my tongue relates
Heav'n's ſteadfaſt purpoſe, and thy future fates.

ỳ. 120. *But ſheath thy ponyard.*———] The terror which the ſhades of the departed expreſs at the ſight of the ſword of Ulyſſes has been frequently cenſured as abſurd and ridiculous: *Riſum cui non moveat*, ſays Scaliger, *cum enſem ait et vulnera metuiſſe?* What have the dead to fear from a ſword, who are beyond the power of it, by being reduced to an incorporeal ſhadow? But this deſcription is conſiſtent with the notions of the antients concerning the dead. I have already remarked, that the ſhades retained a vehicle, which reſembled the body, and was liable to pain as well as the corporeal ſubſtance; if not, to what purpoſe are the Furies deſcribed with iron ſcourges, or the vulture tearing the liver of Tityus?

Virgil aſcribes the like fears to the ſhades in the Æneis: for the Sibyl thus commands Æneas,

Tuque invade viam, vaginaque eripe ferrum.

While yet he ſpoke, the prophet I obey'd,
And in the ſcabbard plung'd the glitt'ring blade:
Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then expreſt
Dark things to come, the counſels of his breaſt.
Weary of light, Ulyſſes here explores,
A proſp'rous voyage to his native ſhores;
But know——by me unerring fates diſcloſe
New trains of dangers, and new ſcenes of woes;
I ſee! I ſee, thy bark by Neptune toſt,
For injur'd Cyclops, and his eyeball loſt!
Yet to thy woes the gods decree an end,
If heav'n thou pleaſe; and how to pleaſe attend!
Where on Trinacrian rocks the Ocean roars,
Graze num'rous herds along the verdant ſhores;
Tho' hunger preſs, yet fly the dang'rous prey,
The herds are ſacred to the God of day,

And the ſhades of the Greeks are there ſaid to fly at the ſight of his arms.

At Danaum proceres, Agamemnoniaeque phalanges
Ut videre virum, fulgentiaque arma per umbras
Ingenti trepidare metu.

Tireſias is here deſcribed conſiſtently with the character before given him by the poet, I mean with a pre-eminence above the other ſhades; for (as Euſtathius obſerves) he knows Ulyſſes before he taſtes the ingredients; a privilege not claimed by any other of the infernal inhabitants. Elpenor indeed did the ſame, but for another reaſon; becauſe he was not yet buried, nor entered the regions of the dead, and therefore his ſoul was yet intire.

Who

Who all ſurveys with his extenſive eye
Above, below, on earth and in the ſky!
Rob not the god, and ſo propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impell thy ſails:
But if his herds ye ſeize, beneath the waves
I ſee thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves!
The direful wreck Ulyſſes ſcarce ſurvives!
Ulyſſes at his country ſcarce arrives!
Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end,
New foes ariſe, domeſtic ills attend!
There foul adult'rers to thy bride reſort,
And lordly gluttons riot in thy court.
But vengeance haſtes amain! Theſe eyes behold
The deathful ſcene, princes on princes roll'd!

ỳ. 145. *Ulyſſes at his country ſcarce arrives!*] The poet conducts this interview with admirable judgment. The whole deſign of Ulyſſes is to engage the Phaeacians in his favour, in order to his tranſportation to his own country: how does he bring this about? By ſhewing that it was decreed by the gods that he ſhould be conducted thither by ſtrangers; ſo that the Phaeacians immediately conclude, that they are the people deſtined by heaven to conduct him home; to give this the greater weight, he puts the ſpeech into the mouth of the prophet Tireſias, and exalts his character in an extraordinary manner, to ſtrengthen the credit of the prediction: by this method likewiſe the poet interweaves his epiſode into the texture and eſſence of the poem, he makes this journey into hell contribute to the reſtoration of his hero, and unites the ſubordinate parts very happily with the main action.

That done, a people far from ſea explore,
Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar,

℣. 152. *That done a people far from ſea explore,*
Who ne'er knew ſalt.———]

It is certain that Tireſias ſpeaks very obſcurely, after the manner of the oracles; but the antients generally underſtood this people to be the Epirots. Thus Pauſanias in his Attics. Οἱ μηδὲ ἁλὸς Ἰλίου θάλασσαν, μηδὲ ἁλσὶν ἠπίσαντο χρῆσθαι, μαρτυρεῖ δὲ μοὶ καὶ Ὁμήρου ἔπος ἐν Ὀδυσσείᾳ.

------Οἱ οὐκ ἴσασι θάλασσαν.

That is; "The Epirots, even ſo lately as after the "taking of Troy, were ignorant of the ſea, and the "uſe of ſalt, as Homer teſtifies in his Odyſſey:

Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar.

So that they who were ignorant of the ſea, were likewiſe ignorant of the uſe of ſalt, according to Homer: whence it may be conjectured, that the poet knew of no ſalt but what was made of ſea-water. The other token of their ignorance of the ſea was, that they ſhould not know an oar, but call it a corn-van. This verſe was once ſarcaſtically applied to Philip of Macedon by Amerdion a Grecian, who, flying from him, and being apprehended, was aſked whither he fled? he bravely anſwered, to find a people who knew not Philip.

Εἴσοχέ τὰς ἀφίκωμαι, οἳ οὐκ ἴσασι Φίλιππον.

I perſuade myſelf that this paſſage is rightly tranſlated; Νέας φοινικοπαρῄους, and τὰ τε πτερὰ νευσὶ πέλονται.

A painted wonder flying on the main;

for the wings of the ſhip ſignify the ſails, as Euſtathius remarks, and not the oars, as we might be miſled to conclude from the immediate connexion with ἐρετμὰ, or oars. The poet, I believe, intended to expreſs the

Or ſaw gay veſſel ſtem the wat'ry plain,
A painted wonder flying in the main!
Bear on thy back an oar: with ſtrange amaze
A ſhepherd meeting thee, the oar ſurveys,
And names a van: there fix it on the plain,
To calm the god that holds the wat'ry reign;
A threefold off'ring to his altar bring,
A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the ocean-king.
But home return'd, to each aetherial pow'r
Slay the due victim in the genial hour:

wonder of a perſon upon his firſt ſight of a ſhip, who obſerving it to move ſwiftly along the ſeas, might miſtake the ſails for wings, according to that beautiful deſcription of Mr. Dryden, upon a like occaſion, in his Indian Emperor.

The objects I could firſt diſtinctly view,
Were tall ſtreight trees which on the waters flew;
Wings on their ſides inſtead of leaves did grow,
Which gather'd all the breath the winds could blow;
And at their roots grew floating palaces, etc.

Euſtathius tells us the reaſon of this command given to Ulyſſes, to ſearch out a people ignorant of the ſea: it was in honour of Neptune, to make his name regarded by a nation which was entirely a ſtranger to that deity; and this injunction was laid by way of atonement for the violence offered to his ſon Polyphemus.

Many critics have imagined that this paſſage is corrupted; but, as Euſtathius obſerves, we have the authority of Sophocles to prove it genuine, who alluding to this paſſage, writes,

Ὦμοις ἀθηρόβρωτον ὄργανον φέρων.

So peaceful ſhalt thou end thy bliſsful days,
And ſteal thyſelf from life, by ſlow decays:
Unknown to pain, in age reſign thy breath,
When late ſtern Neptune points the ſhaft with death:

ỳ. 167. *When late ſtern Neptune points the ſhaft with death.*] The death of Ulyſſes is related variouſly, but the following account is chiefly credited: Ulyſſes had a ſon by Circe, named Telegonus, who, being grown to years of maturity, ſailed to Ithaca in ſearch of his father; where, ſeizing ſome ſheep for the uſe of his attendants, the ſhepherds put themſelves into a poſture to reſcue them; Ulyſſes, being advertiſed of it, went, with his ſon Telemachus to repel Telegonus, who in defending himſelf wounded Ulyſſes, not knowing him to be his father. Thus Oppian, Hyginus, and Dictys relate the ſtory. Many poets have brought this upon the ſtage, and Ariſtotle, criticizing upon one of theſe tragedies, gives us the title of it, which was, *Ulyſſes wounded.* But if Ulyſſes thus died, how can Neptune be ſaid to *point the ſhaft with death?* We are informed, that the ſpear with which Telegonus gave the wound, was pointed with the bone of a ſea turtle; ſo that literally his death came from the ſea, or ἐξ ἁλὸς: and Neptune being the God of the ocean, his death may, without violence, be aſcribed to that deity. It is true, ſome critics read ἐξαλος as one word, and then it will ſignify, that Ulyſſes ſhould eſcape the dangers of the ſea, and die upon the continent far from it; but the former ſenſe is moſt conſonant to the tenor of the poem, through which Neptune is conſtanly repreſented as an enemy to Ulyſſes.

I will only add the reaſon why Ulyſſes is injoined to offer a bull, a ram, and a boar to Neptune: the bull repreſents the roaring of the ſea in ſtorms; the ram the milder appearance of it when in tranquillity:

To the dark grove retiring as to reſt,
Thy people bleſſing, by thy people bleſt!
Unerring truths, oh man! my lips relate;
This is thy life to come, and this is fate.
To whom unmov'd; if this the gods prepare,
What heav'n ordains the wiſe with courage bear.
But ſay, why yonder on the lonely ſtrands,
Unmindful of her ſon, Anticlea ſtands!
Why to the ground ſhe bends her downcaſt eye?
Why is ſhe ſilent, while her ſon is nigh?
The latent cauſe, oh ſacred ſeer, reveal!
Nor this, replies the ſeer, will I conceal.
Know; to the ſpectres, that thy bev'rage taſte,
The ſcenes of life recur, and actions paſt;
They, ſeal'd with truth, return the ſure reply,
The reſt repell'd, a train oblivious fly.
The phantom prophet ceas'd, and ſunk from ſight
To the black palace of eternal night.
Still in the dark abodes of death I ſtood,
When near *Anticlea* mov'd, and drank the blood.
Strait all the mother in her ſoul awakes,
And owning her Ulyſſes, thus ſhe ſpeaks.
Com'ſt thou, my ſon, alive, to realms beneath,
The doleſome realms of darkneſs and of death:

the boar was uſed by the antients as an emblem of fecundity, to repreſent the fruitfulneſs of the ocean. This particular ſacrifice of three animals was called τριτῦα. Euſtathius.

Com'ſt thou alive from pure, aetherial day?
Dire is the region, diſmal is the way!
Here lakes profound, there floods oppoſe their waves,
There the wide ſea, with all his billows, raves! 195

℣. 195. *There the wide ſea with all his billows raves.*] If this paſſage were literally tranſlated, it would run thus: *My ſon, how didſt thou arrive at this place of darkneſs, when ſo many rivers, and the ocean lie in the midway?* This, ſays Euſtathius, plainly ſhews that Homer uſes a fabulous geography; for whereas the places that are mentioned in theſe voyages of Ulyſſes are really ſituated upon the Mediterranean, Anticlea here ſays that they lay in the middle of the ocean. But this is undoubtedly an error: the whole of the obſervation depends upon the word μέσσω; but why muſt this denote the *midway* ſo exactly? Is it not ſufficient to ſay, that *between* Ithaca and this infernal region, rivers and the ocean roul? And that this is the real meaning is evident from this book; for Ulyſſes ſails, in the ſpace of one day, from the iſland of Circe to the place where he deſcends: how then could theſe places where Ulyſſes touches in his voyage lie in the middle of the ocean, unleſs we can ſuppoſe he paſſed half the ocean in one day? The poet directly affirms, that he deſcends at the extremity of it; but this extremity is no more than one day's voyage from the iſland of Circe, and conſequently that iſland could not lie in the middle of the ocean: therefore this place is no evidence that Homer uſes a fabulous geography.

Euſtathius very juſtly obſerves, that Homer judiciouſly places the deſcent into hell at the extremity of the ocean: for it is natural to imagine that to be the only paſſage to it, by which the ſun and the ſtars themſelves appear to deſcend, and ſink into the realms of darkneſs.

Or (ſince to duſt proud Troy ſubmits her tow'rs)
Com'ſt thou a wand'rer from the Phrygian ſhores?
Or ſay, ſince honour call'd thee to the field,
Haſt thou thy Ithaca, thy bride, beheld?
Source of my life, I cry'd, from earth I fly
To ſeek Tireſias in the nether ſky,
To learn my doom: for toſt from woe to woe,
In every land Ulyſſes finds a foe:
Nor have theſe eyes beheld my native ſhores,
Since in the duſt proud Troy ſubmits her towers.
But, when thy ſoul from her ſweet manſion fled,
Say, what diſtemper gave thee to the dead?
Has life's fair lamp declin'd by ſlow decays,
Or ſwift expir'd it in a ſudden blaze?
Say, if my ſire, good old Laertes, lives?
If yet Telemachus, my ſon, ſurvives?
Say, by his rule is my dominion aw'd,
Or cruſh'd by traytors with an iron rod?
Say, if my ſpouſe maintains her royal truſt,
Though tempted chaſte, and obſtinately juſt?
Or if no more her abſent lord ſhe wails,
But the falſe woman o'er the wife prevails.
Thus I, and thus the parent ſhade returns.
Thee, ever thee, thy faithful conſort mourns:

℣. 218. ——*Thus the parent ſhade returns.*] The queſtions which Ulyſſes aſks, remarks Euſtathius, could not fail of having a very good effect upon his Phaeacian audience: by them he very artfully (and, as it ſeems, undeſignedly) lets them into the knowlege of his dig-

Whether the night deſcends, or day prevails;
Thee ſhe by night, and thee by day bewails,
Thee in Telemachus thy realm obeys;
In ſacred groves celeſtial rites he pays,
And ſhares the banquet in ſuperior ſtate,
Grac'd with ſuch honours as become the great.

nity, and ſhews the importance of his perſon; to induce them to a greater care to conduct him to his country. The proceſs of the whole ſtory is ſo artfully carried on, that Ulyſſes ſeems only to relate an accidental interview, while he tacitly recommends himſelf, and lets them know the perſon who aſks their aſſiſtance is a king. It is obſervable, that Anticlea inverts the order in her anſwer, and replies laſt to the firſt queſtion. Orators always reſerve the ſtrongeſt argument for the concluſion, to leave it freſh upon the memory of their auditors; or rather, the poet uſes this method to introduce the ſorrow of Ulyſſes for the death of his mother more naturally: he ſteals away the mind of the reader from attending the main action, to enliven it with a ſcene of tenderneſs and affection in theſe regions of horror.

℣. 224. *And ſhares the banquet in ſuperior ſtate*, etc.] This paſſage is fully explained by Euſtathius: he tells us, that it was an antient cuſtom to invite kings and legiſlators to all public feaſts; this was to do them honour: and the chief ſeat was always reſerved for the chief magiſtrate. Without this obſervation, the lines are unintelligible. It is evident, that the words are not ſpoken of ſacrifices or feaſts made to the gods, but ſocial entertainments, for they are general, ἀνδες καλέυσι, "all the people of the realm invite Telemachus to their "feaſts:" And this ſeems to have been a right due to the chief magiſtrate, for ἀλεγύνειν implies it; which word

Thy ſire in ſolitude foments his care:
The court is joyleſs, for thou art not there!
No coſtly carpets raiſe his hoary head,
No rich embroid'ry ſhines to grace his bed:
Ev'n when keen winter freezes in the ſkies,
Rank'd with his ſlaves, on earth the monarch lies:
Deep are his ſighs, his viſage pale, his dreſs
The garb of woe, and habit of diſtreſs.
And when the autumn takes his annual round,
The leafy honours ſcatt'ring on the ground;
Regardleſs of his years, abroad he lies,
His bed the leaves, his canopy the ſkies.
Thus cares on care his painful days conſume,
And bow his age with ſorrow to the tomb!
For thee my ſon, I wept my life away;
For thee through hell's eternal dungeons ſtray:
Nor came my fate by ling'ring pains and ſlow,
Nor bent the ſilver ſhafted queen her bow;
No dire diſeaſe bereav'd me of my breath:
Thou, thou my ſon, wert my diſeaſe and death;
Unkindly with my love my ſon conſpir'd,
For thee I liv'd, for abſent thee expir'd,

Euſtathius explains by ἐν λόγῳ ποιεῖσθαι; "ſuch an ho-
"nour as ought not to be neglected," or

Grac'd with ſuch honours as become the great.

It gives a very happy image of thoſe ages of the world, when we obſerve ſuch an intercourſe between the king and the ſubject: the idea of power carries no terror in it, but the ruler himſelf makes a part of the public joy.

Thrice in my arms I ſtrove her ſhade to bind,
Thrice through my arms ſhe ſlipt like empty wind,
Or dreams, the vain illuſions of the mind.
Wild with deſpair, I ſhed a copious tide
Of flowing tears, and thus with ſighs reply'd.
Fly'ſt thou, lov'd ſhade, while I thus fondly mourn?
Turn to my arms, to my embraces turn!

ỳ. 248. *Thrice in my arms I ſtrove her ſhade to bind,*
Thrice through my arms ———]

This paſſage plainly ſhews that the vehicles of the departed were believed by the antients to be of an aerial ſubſtance, and retain nothing of corporeal groſſneſs.

Virgil has borrowed theſe verſes.

Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum:
Ter fruſtra comprenſa manus effugit imago,
Par levibus ventis, volucrique ſimillima ſomno.

Scaliger gives the preference to the Roman poet, becauſe he uſes three verſes, at a time when the word *ter* occurs in the deſcription, whereas Homer concludes in little more than two lines. But this is not criticiſing, but trifling: and aſcribing to an author what the author himſelf had no thought of. This puts me in mind of a ſtory in Lucian, where a perſon of a ſtrong imagination, thinking there was a myſtery in μῆνιν, the firſt word in the Iliad, is introduced enquiring of Homer in the regions of the dead, why he placed it in the beginning of his poem? he anſwers, becauſe it firſt came into his head. I doubt not but the number of the lines in this place in both poets was equally accidental; Virgil adds nothing to the thought of Homer, though he uſes more words.

Is it, ye Pow'rs that ſmile at human harms!
Too great a bliſs to weep within her arms?
Or has hell's queen an empty image ſent,
That wretched I might ev'n my joys lament?
O ſon of woe, the penſive ſhade rejoin'd,
Oh moſt inur'd to grief of all mankind!
'Tis not the queen of hell who thee deceives:
All, all are ſuch, when life the body leaves;
No more the ſubſtance of the man remains,
Nor bounds the blood along the purple veins;
Theſe the funereal flames in atoms bear,
To wander with the wind in empty air,
While the impaſſive ſoul reluctant flies
Like a vain dream to theſe infernal ſkies.
But from the dark dominion ſpeed thy way,
And climb the ſteep aſcent to upper day;
To thy chaſte bride the wond'rous ſtory tell,
The woes, the horrors, and the laws of hell.
Thus while ſhe ſpoke, in ſwarms hell's empreſs brings
Daughters and wives of heroes and of kings;

ỳ. 256. ——— *A bliſs to weep within her arms.*] This is almoſt a literal tranſlation; the words in the Greek are, τεταρπώμεσθα γόοιο, or *that we may delight ourſelves with ſorrow*, which Euſtathius explains by ſaying, *there is a pleaſure in weeping:* I ſhould rather underſtand the words to ſignify, that in the inſtant while he is rejoicing at the ſight of his mother, he is compelled to turn his joy into tears, to find the whole ſcene a deluſion.

Thick, and more thick they gather round the blood,
Ghoſt throng'd on ghoſt (a dire aſſembly) ſtood!
Dauntleſs my ſword I ſeize: the airy crew,
Swift as it flaſh'd along the gloom, withdrew;
Then ſhade to ſhade in mutual forms ſucceeds,
Her race recounts, and their illuſtrious deeds. 280
Tyro began: whom great Salmoneus bred;
The royal partner of fam'd Cretheus' bed.

℣. 279. *Then ſhade to ſhade —— ſucceeds.*] Nothing can better ſhew the invention of Homer, than his capacity of furniſhing out a ſcene of ſuch great variety in this infernal region. He calls up the heroes of former ages from a ſtate of inexiſtence to adorn and diverſify his poetry. If it be aſked, what relation this journey into hell has to the main action of the Odyſſey? the anſwer is, It has an epiſodic affinity with it, and ſhews the ſufferings of Ulyſſes more than any of his voyages upon the ocean, as it is more horrible and full of terrors. What a treaſury of antient hiſtory and fables has he opened by this deſcent! he lets us into a variety of different characters of the moſt famous perſonages recorded in antient ſtory; and, at the ſame time, lays before us a ſupplement to the Iliad. If Virgil paid a happy piece of flattery to the Romans, by introducing the greateſt perſons of the beſt families in Rome, in his deſcent in the Æneid; Homer no leſs happily intereſts the Grecians in his ſtory, by honouring the anceſtors of the nobleſt families who ſtill flouriſhed in Greece, in the Odyſſey; a circumſtance that could not fail of being very acceptable to a Grecian or Roman reader, but perhaps leſs entertaining to us, who have no particular intereſt in theſe ſtories.

℣. 281. *Tyro —— whom great Salmoneus bred.*] Virgil gives a very different character of Salmoneus from

For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
He pours his wat'ry ſtore, the virgin burns;

this of Homer: he deſcribes him as an impious perſon who preſumed to imitate the thunder of Jupiter, whereas Homer ſtiles him blameleſs, or ἀμύμων; an argument, ſays Euſtathius, that the preceding ſtory is a fable, invented ſince the days of Homer. This may perhaps be true, and we many naturally conclude it to be true, from his ſilence of it, but not from the epithet ἀμύμων; for, in the firſt book of the Odyſſey, Jupiter gives the ſame appellation to Ægyſthus, even while he condemns him of murder and adultery. Euſtathius adds, that Salmoneus was a great proficient in mechanics, and inventor of a veſſel called βροντεῖον, which imitated thunder by rouling ſtones in it, which gave occaſion to the fictions of the poets.

℣. 283. *For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns*
He pours his wat'ry ſtore, the virgin burns.] There are no fables in the poets that ſeem more bold than theſe concerning the commerce between women, and river gods; but Euſtathius gives us a probable ſolution: I will tranſlate him literally. It was cuſtomary for young virgins to reſort frequently to rivers to bathe in them; and the antients have very well explained theſe fables about the intercourſe between them and the water gods: *Receive my virginity, O Scamander!* ſays a lady; but it is very apparent who this Scamander was: her lover Cimon lay concealed in the reeds. This was a good excuſe for female frailty, in ages of credulity: for ſuch imaginary intercourſe between the fair ſex and deities was not only believed, but eſteemed honourable. No doubt the ladies were frequently deceived; their lovers perſonated the deities, and they took a Cimon to their arms in the diſguiſe of a Scamander.

It is uncertain where this Enipeus flows: Strabo,

Smooth flows the gentle ſtream with wanton pride,
And in ſoft mazes rouls a ſilver tide:
As on his banks the maid enamour'd roves,
The monarch of the deep beholds and loves;
In her Enipeus' form and borrow'd charms,
The am'rous god deſcends into her arms:
Around a ſpacious arch of waves he throws,
And high in air the liquid mountain roſe;
Thus in ſurrounding floods conceal'd he proves
The pleaſing tranſport, and compleats his loves.
Then ſoftly ſighing, he the fair addreſt,
And as he ſpoke, her tender hand he preſt.
Hail, happy nymph! no vulgar births are ow'd
To the prolific raptures of a god:
Lo! when nine times the moon renews her horn,
Two brother heroes ſhall from thee be born;
Thy early care the future worthies claim,
To point them to the arduous paths of fame;
But in thy breaſt th' important truth conceal,
Nor dare the ſecret of a god reveal;

ſays Euſtathius, imagines it to be a river of Peloponneſus, that diſembogues its waters into the Alpheus; for the Theſſalian river is Eniſeus, and not Enipeus: this riſes from mount Othrys, and receives into it the Epidanus. The former ſeems to be the river intended by Homer, for it takes its ſource from a village called Salmone; and what ſtrengthens this conjecture is the neighbourhood of the ocean (or Neptune in this fable) to that river. Lucian has made this ſtory of Enipeus the ſubject of one of his dialogues.

For know, thou Neptune view'ſt! and at my nod
Earth trembles, and the waves confeſs their god.
He added not, but mounting ſpurn'd the plain,
Then plung'd into the chambers of the main.
Now in the time's full proceſs forth ſhe brings
Jove's dread vicegerents, in two future kings;
O'er proud Iolcos Pelias ſtretch'd his reign,
And god-like Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain:
Then fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed
She gallant Pheres and fam'd Æſon bred:
From the ſame fountain Amytheon roſe,
Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble ſhout of foes.
There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
Who bleſt th' almighty thund'rer in her arms;
Hence ſprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
Founders of Thebes, and men of mighty name;

ỳ. 319. *Hence ſprung Amphion*——] The fable of Thebes built by the power of muſic is not mentioned by Homer, and therefore may be ſuppoſed to be of later invention. Homer relates many circumſtances in theſe ſhort hiſtories differently from his ſucceſſors; Epicaſte is called Jocaſta, and the tragedians have entirely varied the ſtory of Oedipus: they tell us he tore out his eyes, that he was driven from Thebes, and being conducted by his daughter Antigone, arrived at Athens, where entering the temple of the Furies, he died in the midſt of a furious ſtorm, and was carried by it into hell: whereas Homer directly affirms, that he continued to reign in Thebes after all his calamities.

It is not eaſy to give a reaſon why the mother, and not the father, is ſaid to ſend the Furies to torment

Though bold in open field, they yet ſurround
The town with walls, and mound inject on mound;
Here ramparts ſtood, there tow'rs roſe high in air,
And here through ſev'n wide portals ruſh'd the war.
There with ſoft ſtep the fair Alcmena trod,
Who bore Alcides to the thund'ring god;
And Megara, who charm'd the ſon of Jove,
And ſoften'd his ſtern ſoul to tender love.
Sullen and ſour with diſcontented mein
Jocaſta frown'd, th' inceſtuous Theban queen:

Oedipus, eſpecially becauſe he was the murderer of his father Laius: Euſtathius anſwers, that it was by accident that he ſlew Laius; but upon the diſcovery of his wickedneſs in marrying his mother Jocaſta, he uſed her with more barbarity and rigour than was neceſſary, and therefore ſhe purſues him with her vengeance. Jocaſta and Dido both die after the ſame manner by their own hands: I agree with Scaliger, that Virgil has deſcribed hanging more happily than Homer.

Informis Lethi nodum trabe nectit ab alta.

Ἀψαμένη βρόχον αἰπὺν ἀφ' ὑψηλοῖο μελάθρου.

There is nothing like the *informis Lethi nodus* in Homer: and, as that critic obſerves, *tam atrox res aliquo verborum ambitu ſtudioſius comprehendenda fuit.* The ſtory of Oedipus is this: Laius being informed by the oracle, that he ſhould be ſlain by his ſon, cauſed Oedipus immediately to be expoſed by his ſhepherds to wild beaſts; but the ſhepherds preſerved him, and gave him education: when he came to years of maturity he went towards Thebes in ſearch of his father, but meeting Laius by the way, and a quarrel ariſing, he ſlew him ignorantly, and married Jocaſta his mother. This is the ſubject of two tragedies in Sophocles.

With her own ſon ſhe join'd in nuptial bands,
Though father's blood imbru'd his murd'rous hands:
The gods and men the dire offence deteſt,
The gods with all their furies rend his breaſt:
In lofty Thebes he wore th' imperial crown,
A pompous wretch! accurs'd upon a throne.
The wife ſelf-murder'd from a beam depends,
And her foul ſoul to blackeſt hell deſcends;
Thence to her ſon the choiceſt plagues ſhe brings,
And the fiends haunt him with a thouſand ſtings.

And now the beauteous Chloris I deſcry,
A lovely ſhade, Amphion's youngeſt joy!
With gifts unnumber'd Neleus ſought her arms,
Nor paid too dearly for unequal'd charms;
Great in Orchomenos, in Pylos great,
He ſway'd the ſceptre with imperial ſtate.

ỳ. 341.——*The beauteous Chloris I deſcry.*] A critic ought not only to endeavour to point out the beauties in the ſenſe, but alſo in the verſification of a poet: Dionyſius Halicarnaſſeus cites theſe two verſes as peculiarly flowing and harmonious.

Καὶ Χλῶριν εἶδον περικαλλέα, τὴν ποτε Νηλεὺς
Γῆμεν ἑὸν διὰ κάλλος, ἐπεὶ πόρε μύρια ἕνδα.

There is not one eliſion, nor one rough vowel or conſonant, but they flow along with the outmoſt ſmoothneſs, and the beauty of the muſe equals that of Chloris.

ỳ. 345. *Great in Orchomenos*——] This is a very conſiderable city lying between Boeotia and Phocis, upon the river Cephiſus: Homer calls it the Minyan Orchomenos, becauſe the Minyans an antient people inha-

Three gallant ſons the joyful monarch told,
Sage Neſtor, Periclimenus the bold,
And Chromius laſt; but of the ſofter race,
One nymph alone, a miracle of grace.
Kings on their thrones for lovely Pero burn,
The ſire denies, and kings rejected mourn.
To him alone the beauteous prize he yields,
Whoſe arm ſhould raviſh from Phylacian fields
The herds of Iphyclus, detain'd in wrong;
Wild, furious herds, unconquerably ſtrong!
This dares a ſeer, but nought the ſeer prevails,
In beauty's cauſe illuſtriouſly he fails:

bited it; it was the colony of theſe Minyans that ſailed to Iolcos, and gave name to the Argonauts. Euſtathius.

℣r 348. —— *Periclimenus the bold.*] The reaſon why Homer gives this epithet to Periclimenus may be learned from Heſiod: Neptune gave him the power to change himſelf into all ſhapes, but he was ſlain by Hercules: Periclimenus aſſaulted that hero in the ſhape of a bee, or fly, who diſcovering him in that diſguiſe, by the means of Pallas, ſlew him with his club. This is the perſon of whom Ovid ſpeaks, but adds, that he was ſlain in the ſhape of an eagle by Hercules.

Mira Periclimini mors eſt, cui poſſe figuras
Sumere quas vellet, rurſuſque reponere ſumptas,
Neptunus dederat, etc.

Euphorion ſpeaks of him in the ſhape of a bee or fly.

-------Ἄλλοτε δ' ἄυτε μελισσῶν ἀγλαὰ φῦλα
Ἄλλοτε δεινὸς Ὄφις -------

℣. 357. *This dares a ſeer*, etc.] This ſtory is related with great obſcurity, but we learn from the 15th

Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detains
In painful dungeons, and coercive chains;
The foe at laſt from durance where he lay,
His art revering gave him back to day;

book that the name of this prophet was Melampus. Iphyclus was the ſon of Deioneus, and uncle to Tyro; he had ſeized upon the goods of Tyro, the mother of Neleus, among which were many beautiful oxen: theſe Neleus demands, but is unjuſtly denied by Iphyclus: Neleus had a daughter named Pero, a great beauty, who was courted by all the neighbouring princes, but the father refuſes her unleſs to the man who recovers theſe oxen from Iphyclus: Bias was in love with Pero, and perſuades his brother Melampus, a prophet, to undertake the recovery; he attempts it, but being vanquiſhed, is thrown into priſon; but at laſt ſet at liberty, for telling Iphyclus, who was childleſs, how to procure iſſue. Iphyclus upon this gave him the oxen for a reward.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the explanation of this ſtory in Euſtathius, which I will lay before the reader for his entertainment. Melampus, after he was made a priſoner, was truſted to the care of a man and a woman; the man uſed him with mercy, and the woman with cruelty: one day he heard a low noiſe, and a family of worms in conference. (He underſtood the language of all the animal creation, beaſts and reptiles.) Theſe worms were diſcourſing how they had eaten through a great beam that lay over the head of Melampus: he immediately provides for his own ſafety, feigns a ſickneſs, and begs to be carried into the freſh air: the woman and the man immediately comply with his requeſt: at which inſtant the beam falling, kills the woman: an account of this is forthwith carried to Iphyclus, who, ſending for Melampus, aſks

Won by prophetic knowlege, to fulfill
The ſtedfaſt purpoſe of th' almighty will.

With graceful port advancing now I ſpy'd
Leda the fair, the godlike Tyndar's bride:
Hence Pollux ſprung who wields, with furious ſway,
The deathful gauntlet, matchleſs in the fray:
And Caſtor glorious on th' embattled plain
Curbs the proud ſteed, reluctant to the rein:
By turns they viſit this aetherial ſky,
And live alternate, and alternate die:

who he is? He tells him, a prophet, and that he came for the oxen of Neleus: Iphyclus commands him to declare how he may have an heir. Melampus kills an ox, and calls all the birds of the air to feaſt on it; they all appear except the vulture; he propoſes the caſe to them, but they give no ſatisfactory anſwer; at laſt the vulture appears, and gives Melampus a full information: upon this Iphyclus obtains a child, and Melampus the oxen of Neleus.

℣. 364. *The ſtedfaſt purpoſe of th' almighty will.*] Theſe words, διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή, ſeem to come in without any connexion with the ſtory, and conſequently unneceſſarily; but Homer ſpeaks of it conciſely, as an adventure well known in his times, and therefore not wanting a further explication: but Apollodorus relates the whole at large, lib. 1. The reaſon why theſe words are inſerted is, to inform us that there were antient prophecies concerning Iphyclus, that it was decreed by Jupiter he ſhould have no children till he had recourſe to a prophet, who explaining theſe prophecies to him ſhould ſhew him how to obtain that bleſſing: in this ſenſe the will of Jupiter may be ſaid to be fulfilled.

℣. 372. *And live alternate, and alternate die.*] Caſtor

In hell beneath, on earth, in heav'n above
Reign the twin-gods, the fav'rite ſons of Jove.
There Ephimedia trod the gloomy plain,
Who charm'd the monarch of the boundleſs main;
Hence Ephialtes, hence ſtern Otus ſprung,
More fierce than giants, more than giants ſtrong;
The earth o'erburden'd groan'd beneath their weight,
None but Orion e'er ſurpaſs'd their height:
The wond'rous youths had ſcarce nine winters told,
When high in air, tremendous to behold,
Nine ells aloft they rear'd their tow'ring head,
And full nine cubits broad their ſhoulders ſpread.

and Pollux are called Διόσκυροι, or *the ſons of Jupiter*; but what could give occaſion to this fiction, of their living and dying alternately? Euſtathius informs us that it is a phyſical allegory: they repreſent the two hemiſpheres of the world; the one of which is continually enlightened by the ſun, and conſequently the other is then in darkneſs: and theſe being ſucceſſively illuminated according to the order of the day and night, one of theſe ſons of Jupiter may be ſaid to revive when one part of the world riſes into day, and the other to die, when it deſcends into darkneſs. What makes this allegory the more probable is, that Jupiter denotes, in many allegories of Homer, the air, or the upper regions of it.

℣. 383. *Nine ells aloft they rear'd their head.*] This is undoubtedly a very bold fiction, and has been cenſured by ſome critics as monſtrous, and praiſed by others as ſublime. It may ſeem utterly incredible, that any human creatures could be nine ells, that is, eleven yards and a quarter in height, at the age of nine years. But it may vindicate Homer, as a poet, to ſay, that he on-

Proud of their ſtrength and more than mortal ſize,
The gods they challenge, and affect the ſkies; 386

ly made uſe of a fable, that had been tranſmitted down from the earlieſt times of the world; for ſo early the war between the gods and giants was ſuppoſed to be. There might a rational account be given of theſe apparent incredibilities; if I might be allowed to ſay what many authors of great name have conjectured, that theſe ſtories are only traditional, and all founded upon the ejection of the fallen angels from heaven, and the wars they had with the good angels to regain their ſtations. If this might be allowed, we ſhall then have real giants, who endeavoured to take heaven by aſſault; then nothing can be invented by a poet ſo boldly, as to exceed what may juſtly be believed of theſe beings: then the ſtories of heaping mountain upon mountain will come within the bounds of credibility. But without having recourſe to this ſolution, Longinus brings this paſſage as an inſtance of true ſublimity, chap. 6. He is proving that the ſublime is ſometimes found without the pathetic, for ſome paſſions are mean, as fear, ſadneſs, ſorrow, and conſequently incapable of ſublimity; and on the other hand, there are many things great and ſublime, in which there is no paſſion; of this kind is what Homer ſays concerning Otus and Ephialtes, with ſo much boldneſs.

The gods they challenge, and affect the ſkies.

And what he adds concerning the ſucceſs of theſe giants is ſtill bolder.

Had they to manhood grown, the bright abodes
Of heav'n had ſhook, and gods been heap'd on gods.

Virgil was of the opinion of Longinus, for he has imitated Homer.

Hic et Aloidas geminos immania vidi

Heav'd on Olympus tott'ring Oſſa ſtood;
On Oſſa, Pelion nods with all his wood:

Corpora, qui manibus magnum reſcindere coelum
Aggreſſi, ſuperiſque Jovem detrudere regnis.

Macrobius, lib. 5. Saturn. cap. 13. judges theſe verſes to be inferior to Homer's in majeſty; in Homer we have the height and breadth of theſe giants, and he happily paints the very ſize of their limbs in the run of his poetry; two words, ἐννέωροι, and ἐννεαπήχεες, almoſt make one verſe, deſignedly choſen to expreſs their bulk in the turn of words; but Virgil ſays only *immania corpora*, and makes no addition concerning the giants, omitting entirely the circumſtance of their ſize: Homer relates the piling hill upon hill, Virgil barely adds, that they endeavoured to ſtorm the heavens.

Scaliger is firm and faithful to Virgil, and vindicates his favourite in the true ſpirit of criticiſm. I perſuade myſelf he glances at Macrobius, for he cavils at thoſe inſtances which he produces as beauties in Homer; I give his anſwer in his own words. *Admirantur Graeculi pueriles menſuras; nimis ſaepe cogor exclamare, aliud eſſe Graeculum circulatorem, aliud regiae orationis autorem: indignam cenſuit ſua majeſtate Virgilius hanc minutam ſuperſtitionem*, etc.

Euſtathius remarks, that the antients greatly admired the exact proportion of theſe giants, for the body is of a due ſymmetry, when the thickneſs is three degrees leſs than the height of it. According to this account the giants grew one cubit every year in bulk, and three in height. Homer ſays, that they fell by the ſhafts of Apollo, that is, they died ſuddenly; but other writers relate, that as they were hunting, Diana ſent a ſtag between them, at which both at once aiming their weapons, and ſhe withdrawing the ſtag, they fell by their own darts. Euſtathius.

℣. 387. —— *On Olympus tott'ring Oſſa ſtood*, etc.]

Such were the youths! had they to manhood grown,
Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne.
But ere the harveſt of the beard began
To briſtle on the chin, and promiſe man,
His ſhafts Apollo aim'd; at once they ſound,
And ſtretch the giant-monſters o'er the ground.
There mournful Phaedra with ſad Procris moves,
Both beauteous ſhades, both hapleſs in their loves;

Strabo takes notice of the judgment of Homer, in placing the mountains in this order; they all ſtand in Macedonia; Olympus is the largeſt, and therefore he makes it the baſis upon which Oſſa ſtands, that being the next to Olympus in magnitude, and Pelion being the leaſt is placed above Oſſa, and thus they riſe pyramidically. Virgil follows a different regulation,

Ter ſunt conati imponere Pelion Oſſae,
Silicet atque Oſſae frondoſum imponere Olympum.

Here the largeſt mountain is placed uppermoſt, not ſo naturally as in the order of Homer. There is a peculiar beauty in the former of theſe verſes, in which Virgil makes the two vowels in *conati imponere* meet without an eliſion, to expreſs the labour and ſtraining of the giants in heaving mountain upon mountain. I appeal to the ear of every reader, if he can pronounce theſe two words without a pauſe and ſtop; the difficulty in the flow of the verſe excellently repreſents the labour of the giants ſtraining to ſhove Pelion upon Oſſa. Dacier remarks that Virgil follows the ſituation of the mountains without regarding the magnitude; thus Pelion lies firſt on the north of Macedonia. Oſſa is the the ſecond, and the third Olympus; but ſhe prefers Homer's method as moſt rational.

And near them walk'd, with ſolemn pace and ſlow,
Sad Ariadne, partner of their woe;
The royal Minos Ariadne bred,
She Theſeus lov'd; from Crete with Theſeus fled;
Swift to the Dian iſle the heroe flies,
And tow'rds his Athens bears the lovely prize;

ỳ. 402. *And tow'rds his Athens bears the lovely prize.*] Homer juſtifies Theſeus from any crime with relation to Ariadne; he is guilty of no infidelity as ſucceeding poets affirm; ſhe died ſuddenly in Dia, or Naxos (an iſland lying between Thera and Crete.) Diana ſlew her at the inſtigation of Bacchus, who accuſed her to that goddeſs, for prophaning her temple by too free an intercourſe with Theſeus; this Homer calls μαρτυρίη Διονύσου. Climene was a daughter of Mynias, Maera of Proetus and Antaea, who having made a vow to Diana of perpetual virginity, broke it; and therefore fell by that goddeſs. Phaedra was wife to Theſeus, and fell in love with her ſon Hippolytus. Eriphyle was the daughter of Talaus and Lyſimache, wife of the prophet Amphiaraus; who being bribed with a collar of gold by Polynices, obliged her huſband to go to the war of Thebes, though ſhe knew he was decreed to fall before that city: ſhe was ſlain by her ſon Alcmaeon. Euſtathius.

Ulyſſes when he concludes, ſays it is time to repoſe

Here in the court, or yonder on the waves.

To underſtand this, the reader muſt remember, that in the beginning of the eighth book all things were prepared for his immediate voyage, or, as it is there expreſſed,

——— *Ev'n now the gales*
Call thee aboard, and ſtretch the ſwelling ſails.

There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires,
The Goddeſs aims her ſhaft, the nymph expires.
There Clymene and Maera I behold,
There Eriphyle weeps, who looſely ſold
Her lord, her honour for the luſt of gold.
But ſhould I all recount, the night would fail,
Unequal to the melancholy tale:
And all-compoſing reſt my nature craves,
Here in the court, or yonder on the waves;
In you I truſt, and in the heav'nly pow'rs,
To land Ulyſſes on his native ſhores.
He ceas'd: but left ſo charming on their ear
His voice, that liſt'ning ſtill they ſeem'd to hear.
'Till riſing up, Arete ſilence broke,
Stretch'd out her ſnowy hand, and thus ſhe ſpoke:

So that he deſires to repoſe in the ſhip, that he may begin his voyage early in the morning.

℣. 414. *He ceas'd: but left ſo charming on their ear*
His voice ——]

I cannot tell whether this pauſe, or break in the narration of Ulyſſes, has a good effect or not; whether it gives a relief to the reader, or is an unexpected diſappointment of the purſuit of the ſtory: but certainly what is inſerted during this ſhort interruption, is particularly well choſen; it unites the epiſode with the main action, and ſhews how it contributes to the end of the Odyſſey, in influencing the Phaeacians not only to reſtore Ulyſſes, but reſtore him with wealth and honour, which is the aim of the whole poem.

℣. 416. —— *Arete ſilence broke.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that the two motives which the queen uſes to move the Phaeacians to liberality, is the relation Ulyſ-

What wond'rous man heav'n ſends us in our gueſt!
Through all his woes the hero ſhines confeſt:
His comely port, his ample frame expreſs
A manly air, majeſtic in diſtreſs.
He, as my gueſt, is my peculiar care,
You ſhare the pleaſure,—then in bounty ſhare;
To worth in miſery a rev'rence pay,
And with a gen'rous hand reward his ſtay;

ſes has to her, as her peculiar gueſt, (for Nauſicaa firſt recommended him to the queen's protection,) and their own wealth: (for ſo he renders ἕκαστος δ' ἐμμορε τιμῆς, And Dacier follows his interpretation:) I have adventured to tranſlate it differently, in this ſenſe: "It is "true, he is my peculiar gueſt, but you all ſhare in "the honour he does us, and therefore it is equitable "to join in his aſſiſtance;" then ſhe cloſes her ſpeech with reminding them of their abilities; which in the other ſenſe would be tautology.

℣. 425. ——*With a gen'rous hand reward his ſtay.*] This, I am perſuaded, is the true meaning of the paſſage; Ulyſſes had ſhewed a deſire immediately to go aboard, and the queen draws an argument from this to induce the Phaeacians to a greater contribution, and Ulyſſes to a longer ſtay; ſhe perſuades them to take time to prepare their preſents, which muſt occaſion the ſtay of Ulyſſes till they are prepared. They might otherways, obſerves Dacier, have pretended to comply with the impatience of Ulyſſes, and immediately diſmiſſed him with a ſmall gratuity, under the pretext of not having time to prepare a greater. It muſt be confeſſed, to the reproach of human nature, that this is but too juſt a picture of it: ſelf-intereſt makes the great very ready to gratify their petitioners with a diſmiſſion, or to comply with them to their diſadvantage.

For ſince kind heav'n with wealth our realm has bleſt,
Give it to heav'n, by aiding the diſtreſt.

Then ſage Echeneus, whoſe grave, rev'rend brow
The hand of time had ſilver'd o'er with ſnow,
Mature in wiſdom roſe: Your words, he cries,
Demand obedience, for your words are wiſe.
But let our king direct the glorious way
To gen'rous acts; our part is to obey.

While life informs theſe limbs, the king reply'd,
Well to deſerve, be all my cares employ'd:
But here this night the royal gueſt detain,
'Till the ſun flames along th' ethereal plain:
Be it my taſk to ſend, with ample ſtores,
The ſtranger from our hoſpitable ſhores;
Tread you my ſteps! 'tis mine to lead the race,
The firſt in glory, as the firſt in place.

To whom the prince: This night with joy I ſtay,
O monarch great in virtue as in ſway!
If thou the circling year my ſtay controul,
To raiſe a bounty noble as thy ſoul;

℣. 444. *If thou the circling year*, etc.——] This ſpeech of Ulyſſes has been condemned by the critics, as avaricious; and therefore Euſtathius judges it to be ſpoken artfully and complimentally; Didymus, with a well-bred urbanity, or χαριέντως: I ſee nothing mean in it; what Ulyſſes ſpeaks proceeds from the gratitude of his ſoul; the heart of a brave man is apt to overflow while it acknowleges an obligation. Spondanus imagines that Ulyſſes may poſſibly ſpeak jocoſely, and aſks if it is probable that he could be induced to ſtay from

The circling year I wait, with ampler ſtores
And fitter pomp to hail my native ſhores:
Then by my realms due homage would be paid;
For wealthy kings are loyally obey'd!
O king! for ſuch thou art, and ſure thy blood
Through veins, he cry'd, of royal fathers flow'd;
Unlike thoſe vagrants who on falſhood live,
Skill'd in ſmooth tales, and artful to deceive;
Thy better ſoul abhors the liar's part,
Wiſe is thy voice, and noble is thy heart.

his country out of a mean conſideration of a few preſents, who had already preferred it to immortality? But in truth, Ulyſſes never behaves with levity; and it would give us an ill idea of that hero, ſhould he return the united kindneſs of the peers of Phaeacia with ſcorn and deriſion: beſides, Ulyſſes values theſe preſents no otherwiſe than as they may contribute to his re-eſtabliſhment in his country; for he directly ſays,

So by my realms due homage ſhould be paid,
A wealthy prince is loyally obey'd.

This is an evidence, that the words of Ulyſſes flow not from ſo baſe a fountain as avarice, but that all his thoughts and actions center upon his country.

ν. 454. *Thy better ſoul abhors the liar's part,*
Wiſe is thy voice ———]

This is an inſtance of the judgment of Homer in ſuſtaining his characters: the Phaeacians were at firſt deſcribed as a credulous people, and he gives us here an inſtance of their credulity, for they ſwallow all theſe fables as ſo many realities. The verſe in the original is remarkable.

Σοὶ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν μορφὴ ἐπέων ἐπὶ δὲ φρένες ἐσθλαί.

Thy words like muſic every breaſt controul,
Steal through the ear, and win upon the ſoul;
Soft, as ſome ſong divine, thy ſtory flows,
Nor better could the muſe record thy woes.
But ſay, upon the dark and diſmal coaſt,
Saw'ſt thou the worthies of the Grecian hoſt?
The god-like leaders who, in battle ſlain,
Fell before Troy, and nobly preſt the plain?
And lo! a length of night behind remains,
The evening ſtars ſtill mount th'ethereal plains.
Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,
Thy woes on earth, the wond'rous ſcenes in hell,
'Till in the vault of heav'n the ſtars decay,
And the ſky reddens with the riſing day.

Which Euſtathius thinks was uſed by Alcinous, to tell Ulyſſes that his fables were ſo well laid together as to have the appearance of truth; Dacier follows him, and, as uſual, delivers his opinion as her own ſentiment. But this cannot be Homer's intention, for it ſuppoſes Alcinous to look upon theſe relations as fables, contrary to the univerſal character of their ignorant credulity; I therefore am perſuaded, that μορφὴ ἐπέων, ſignifies the pleaſantneſs or beauty of his relation, and φρενὶς ἐσθλαὶ, the integrity of his heart, in oppoſition to the character of a liar, or perhaps his wiſdom in general: and this excellently agrees with his reſembling him to a muſician, (who always was a poet in thoſe ages, and ſung the exploits of heroes, *etc.* to the lyre.) In this view the ſweetneſs of the muſic repreſents the agreeableneſs of the narration, and the ſubject of the muſician's ſong the ſtory of his adventures.

O worthy of the pow'r the gods aſſign'd,
Ulyſſes thus replies, a king in mind!
Since yet the early hour of night allows
Time for diſcourſe, and time for ſoft repoſe,
If ſcenes of miſery can entertain,
Woes I unfold, of woes a diſmal train.
Prepare to hear of murder and of blood;
Of god-like heroes who uninjur'd ſtood
Amidſt a war of ſpears in foreign lands,
Yet bled at home, and bled by female hands.
Now ſummon'd Proſerpine to hell's black hall
The heroine ſhades; they vaniſh'd at her call;
When lo! advanc'd the forms of heroes ſlain
By ſtern Ægyſthus, a majeſtic train,
And high above the reſt, Atrides preſt the plain.
He quaff'd the gore; and ſtrait his ſoldier knew,
And from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew;
His arms he ſtretch'd; his arms the touch deceive,
Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give:
His ſubſtance vaniſh'd, and his ſtrength decay'd,
Now all Atrides is an empty ſhade.
Mov'd at the ſight, I for a ſpace reſign'd
To ſoft affliction all my manly mind,
At laſt with tears —— O what relentleſs doom,
Imperial phantom, bow'd thee to the tomb?
Say, while the ſea, and while the tempeſt raves,
Has fate oppreſs'd thee in the roring waves,
Or nobly ſeiz'd thee in the dire alarms
Of war and ſlaughter, and the claſh of arms?

The ghoſt returns: O chief of humankind
For active courage and a patient mind;
Nor while the ſea, nor while the tempeſt raves,
Has fate oppreſs'd me on the roring waves!
Nor nobly ſeiz'd me in the dire alarms,
Of war and ſlaughter, and the claſh of arms.
Stab'd by a murd'rous hand Atrides dy'd,
A foul adult'rer, and a faithleſs bride;
Ev'n in my mirth and at the friendly feaſt,
O'er the full bowl, the traitor ſtab'd his gueſt:
Thus by the gory arm of ſlaughter falls
The ſtately ox, and bleeds within the ſtalls.
But not with me the direful murder ends,
Theſe, theſe expir'd! their crime, they were my friends;
Thick as the boars which ſome luxurious lord
Kills for the feaſt, to crown the nuptial board.
When war has thunder'd with its loudeſt ſtorms,
Death thou haſt ſeen in all her ghaſtly forms;
In duel met her, on the liſted ground,
When hand to hand they wound return for wound;
But never have thy eyes aſtoniſh'd view'd
So vile a deed, ſo dire a ſcene of blood.
Ev'n in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
Glows in our veins, and opens ev'ry ſoul,
We groan, we faint; with blood the dome is dy'd,
And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tide——
Her breaſt all gore, with lamentable cries,
The bleeding innocent Caſſandra dies!

Then though pale death froze cold in ev'ry vein,
My ſword I ſtrive to wield, but ſtrive in vain;
Nor did my traitreſs wife theſe eyelids cloſe,
Or decently in death my limbs compoſe.
O woman, woman, when to ill thy mind
Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:
And ſuch was mine! who baſely plung'd her ſword
Through the fond boſom where ſhe reign'd ador'd!
Alas! I hop'd, the toils of war o'ercome,
To meet ſoft quiet and repoſe at home;
Deluſive hope! O wife, thy deeds diſgrace
The perjur'd ſex, and blacken all the race;
And ſhould poſterity one virtuous find,
Name Clytemneſtra, they will curſe the kind.

℣. 539. *And ſhould poſterity one virtuous find,*
Name Clytemneſtra, they will curſe the kind.]
There cannot be a greater ſatire upon the fair ſex than this whole conference between Ulyſſes and Agamemnon. Terence has fallen into the ſentiment with Homer.

Ædepol, nae nos aeque ſumus omnes inviſae viris
Propter paucas, quae omnes faciunt dignae ut videamur malo.

But how is this to be reconciled to juſtice? and why ſhould the innocent ſuffer for the crimes of the guilty? We are to take notice, that Agamemnon ſpeaks with anger, an undiſtinguiſhing paſſion, and his words flow from reſentment, not reaſon; it muſt be confeſſed that Agamemnon had received great provocation, his wife had diſhonoured his bed, and taken his life away; it is therefore no wonder if he flies out into a vehemence of language; a poet is obliged to follow nature, and give

O injur'd ſhade, I cry'd, what mighty woes
To thy imperial race from woman roſe!

a fierceneſs to the features, when he paints a perſon in ſuch emotions, and add a violence to his colours.

It has been objected, that Homer, and even Virgil, were enemies to the faireſt part of the creation; that there is ſcarce a good character of a woman in either of the poets: but Andromache in the Iliad, and Penelope, Arete, and Nauſicaa in the Odyſſey, are inſtances to the contrary. I muſt own I am a little at a loſs to vindicate Ulyſſes in this place; he is ſpeaking before Arete and Nauſicaa, a queen and her daughter; and entertains them with a ſatire upon their own ſex, which may appear unpolite, and a want of decency; and be applied by Alcinous as a caution to beware of his ſpouſe, and not to truſt her, in matters of importance, with his ſecrets; for this is the moral that is naturally drawn from the fable. Madam Dacier gives up the cauſe, and allows the advice of not truſting women to be good; it comes from her indeed a little unwillingly; with *I will not ſay but the counſel may be right.* I, for my part, will allow Ulyſſes to be in an hundred faults, rather than lay ſuch an imputation upon the ladies; Ulyſſes ought to be conſidered as having ſuffered twenty years calamities for that ſex in the cauſe of Helen, and this poſſibly may give a little acrimony to his language. He puts it indeed in the mouth of Agamemnon; but the objection returns, why does he chuſe to relate ſuch a ſtory before a queen and her daughter? In ſhort, I think they ought to have torn him to pieces, as the ladies of Thrace ſerved Orpheus.

ỳ. 541. ——— *What mighty woes*
To thy imperial race from woman roſe?]

Ulyſſes here means Aerope the wife of Atreus, and mother of Agamemnon, who being corrupted by Thyeſtes, involved the whole family in the utmoſt calamities. Euſtathius.

By woman here thou tread'ſt this mournful ſtrand,
And Greece by woman lies a deſart land.
Warn'd by my ills beware, the ſhade replies,
Nor truſt the ſex that is ſo rarely wiſe;
When earneſt to explore thy ſecret breaſt,
Unfold ſome trifle, but conceal the reſt.
But in thy conſort ceaſe to fear a foe,
For thee ſhe feels ſincerity of woe:
When Troy firſt bled beneath the Grecian arms
She ſhone unrival'd with a blaze of charms,
Thy infant ſon her fragrant boſom preſt,
Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breaſt;
But now the years a num'rous train have ran;
The blooming boy is ripen'd into man;
Thy eyes ſhall ſee him burn with noble fire,
The ſire ſhall bleſs his ſon, the ſon his ſire;
But my Oreſtes never met theſe eyes,
Without one look the murder'd father dies;
Then from a wretched friend this wiſdom learn,
Ev'n to thy queen diſguis'd, unknown, return;
For ſince of womankind ſo few are juſt,
Think all are falſe, nor ev'n the faithful truſt.
But ſay, reſides my ſon in royal port,
In rich Orchomenos, or Sparta's court?

ỳ. 565. *But ſay, reſides my ſon*——] Euſtathius gives us the reaſon why Agamemnon mentions Pyle, Sparta, and Orchomenos, as places where Oreſtes might make his reſidence: Sparta was under the dominion of his brother Menelaus: Pyle, of his old friend and faith-

Or ſay in Pyle? for yet he views the light,
Nor glides a phantom through the realms of night.

Then I: thy ſuit is vain, nor can I ſay
If yet he breathes in realms of chearful day;
Or pale or wan beholds theſe nether ſkies?
Truth I revere: for wiſdom never lies.

Thus in a tide of tears our ſorrows flow,
And add new horror to the realms of woe;
'Till ſide by ſide along the dreary coaſt
Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghoſt,

ful counſellor Neſtor; and Orchomenos was a city of great ſtrength, and therefore of great ſecurity. We may evidently gather from this paſſage what notion the antients had concerning a future ſtate: namely, that perſons, after death, were entirely ſtrangers to the affairs of this world; for Oreſtes his ſon had ſlain his murderer Ægyſthus, and reigned in peaceable poſſeſſion of his dominions; when Agamemnon is ignorant of the whole tranſaction, and deſires Ulyſſes to give him information.

℣. 576. —— *Achilles' and Patroclus' ghoſt.*] Homer lets no opportunity paſs of celebrating his hero Achilles, he cannot fail of awakening our attention to hear the ſtory of this great man after death, of whom alive he ſaw ſuch wonders. Beſides, the poet pays an honour to true friendſhip: the perſon whom Achilles beſt loved on earth, is his chief companion in the other world: a very ſtrong argument to cultivate friendſhip with ſincerity. Achilles here literally fulfils what he promiſed in the Iliad.

If in the melancholly ſhades below
The flames of friends, and lovers ceaſe to glow,
Yet mine ſhall ſacred laſt; mine undecay'd
Burn on through death, and animate my ſhade.

A friendly pair! near theſe the Pylian * ſtray'd,
And tow'ring Ajax, an illuſtrious ſhade!
War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
None but Pelides brighter ſhone in arms.

Through the thick gloom his friend Achilles knew,
And as he ſpeaks, the tears deſcend in dew.

Com'ſt thou alive to view the Stygian bounds,
Where the wan ſpectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'ſt the dark and diſmal waſt to tread,
Throng'd with pale ghoſts, familiar with the dead?

To whom with ſighs: I paſs theſe dreadful gates
To ſeek the Theban, and conſult the fates:
For ſtill diſtreſt I rove from coaſt to coaſt,
Loſt to my friends, and to my country loſt.
But ſure the eye of time beholds no name
So bleſt as thine in all the rolls of fame;
Alive we hail'd thee with our guardian gods,
And, dead thou rul'ſt a king in theſe abodes.

Talk not of ruling in this dol'rous gloom,
Nor think vain words, he cry'd, can eaſe my doom;
Rather I chuſe laborioufly to bear
A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
A ſlave to ſome poor hind that toils for bread,
Than reign the ſcepter'd monarch of the dead.

* Antilochus.

℣. 599. *A ſlave to ſome poor hind who toils for bread,*
Than reign the ſcepter'd monarch of the dead.]
Nothing ſure can give us a more diſadvantagious image of a future ſtate, than this ſpeech which Homer puts in-

But ſay, if in my ſteps my ſon proceeds,
And emulates his god-like father's deeds?
If at the claſh of arms, and ſhout of foes,
Swells his bold heart, his boſom nobly glows?

to the mouth of ſo great a hero as Achilles. If the poet intended to ſhew the vanity of that deſtructive glory which is purchaſed by the ſword, and read a lecture to all the diſturbers of mankind, whom we abſurdly honour as heroes, it muſt be allowed he has done it effectually: if this was not his deſign, the remark of Plato, 3 Repub. is not without a foundation; he there proſcribes this whole paſſage as dangerous to morals, and blames the poet for making Achilles ſay he prefers miſery and ſervitude to all the honours which the dead are capable of enjoying. For what, ſays he, can make death more terrible to young perſons? and will it not diſpoſe them to ſuffer all calamities to avoid it, deter them from expoſing themſelves to danger, even in defence of their country, and teach them to be cowards and ſlaves? Lucian was of Plato's opinion, for he mentions this paſſage, and ridicules it in his dialogues. Dacier gives a different turn to it, and endeavours to ſhew that there is no danger of ſuch conſequences, as Plato draws from it: "Achilles, adds ſhe, ſpeaks di-
"rectly contrary to his declared ſentiments and acti-
"ons, and therefore there is no danger he ſhould per-
"ſuade mankind to prefer ſervitude before death, when
"he himſelf died rather than not revenge his friend Pa-
"troclus. Such words, which are contradicted both
"by the ſentiments and actions of him that ſpeaks,
"have, on the contrary, a very good effect." But I cannot come into her opinion; I will let Achilles anſwer for himſelf out of Lucian; "In the other world,
"I was ignorant, ſays he, of the ſtate of the dead, I
"had not experienced the difference between the two

Say, if my ſire, the rev'rend Peleus reigns
Great in his Pthia, and his throne maintains;
Or weak and old, my youthful arm demands,
To fix the ſcepter ſtedfaſt in his hands?
O might the lamp of life rekindled burn,
And death releaſe me from the ſilent urn!
This arm that thunder'd o'er the Phrygian plain,
And ſwell'd the ground with mountains of the ſlain,
Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,
Cruſh the proud rebel, and aſſert his claim.
Illuſtrious ſhade, I cry'd, of Peleus' fates
No circumſtance the voice of fame relates:
But hear with pleas'd attention the renown,
The wars and wiſdom of thy gallant ſon:
With me from Scyros to the field of fame
Radiant in arms the blooming hero came:
When Greece aſſembled all her hundred ſtates
To ripen counſels, and decide debates,

" ſtates, when I preferred a little empty glory to life." This is an anſwer to what Dacier advances, for Achilles ſpeaks with experience, and yet prefers miſery and life before glory and death. I know not how to vindicate Homer, unleſs it be a vindication to ſay, that he wrote according to the opinions that antiently prevailed in the world; or that, like Hercules, while the vehicle of Achilles is in this ſtate of horror, his ſoul may be in heaven; eſpecially ſince he received divine honours after death, as well as Hercules. Tull. Nat. Deor. 3. *Aſtypalaea Achillem ſanctiſſime colit, qui ſi Deus eſt, et Orpheus*, etc.

Heav'ns! how he charm'd us with a flow of ſenſe,
And won the heart with manly eloquence!
He firſt was ſeen of all the peers to riſe,
The third in wiſdom where they all were wiſe;
But when to try the fortune of the day,
Hoſt mov'd tow'rd hoſt in terrible array,
Before the van, impatient for the fight,
With martial port he ſtrode, and ſtern delight;
Heaps ſtrow'd on heaps beneath his faulchion groan'd,
And monuments of dead deform'd the ground.

ỳ. 626. *The third in wiſdom* ———] I have not ventured to render the Greek literally; Ulyſſes ſays that Neoptolemus was ſo wiſe, that only he himſelf and Neſtor were wiſer; a truth that would appear more graceful, if ſpoken by any other perſon than Ulyſſes. But perhaps the poet puts theſe words into his mouth, only becauſe he is ſpeaking to the Phaeacians, who loved themſelves to boaſt, and were full of vain-glory; and conſequently they could not think ſelf-praiſe a crime in Ulyſſes; on the contrary, it could not fail of having a very good effect, as it ſets him off as a perſon of conſummate wiſdom.

The poet excellently ſuſtains the character of Achilles in this interview: in the Iliad he is deſcribed a dutiful ſon, and always expreſſing a tender affection for his father Peleus; in the Odyſſey he is drawn in the ſame ſoft colours: in the Iliad, he is repreſented as a man of a ſtrong reſentment; in the Odyſſey, he firſt imagines that his father ſuffers, and upon this imagination he immediately takes fire, and flies into threats and fury.

Dictys, lib. 6. relates, that Peleus was expulſed from his kingdom by Acaſtus, but that Pyrrhus the ſon of Achilles afterwards revenged the injury.

The time would fail ſhould I in order tell
What foes were vanquiſh'd, and what numbers fell;
How, loſt through love, Eurypylus was ſlain,
And round him bled his bold Cetaean train.

℣. 635. *How, loſt through love, Eurypylus was ſlain.*] It muſt be owned that this paſſage is very intricate: Strabo himſelf complains of its obſcurity: the poet, ſays that author, rather propoſes an aenigma, than a clear hiſtory: for who are theſe Cetaeans, and what are theſe *preſents of women?* and adds, that the grammarians darken, inſtead of clearing the obſcurity. But it is no difficulty to ſolve theſe objections from Euſtathius.

It is evident from Strabo himſelf, that Eurypylus reigned near the river Caicus, over the Myſians, and Pliny confines it to Teuthrany; this agrees with what Ovid writes, Metam. 2.

——— *Teuthrantaeuſque Caicus.*

And Virgil ſhews us that Caicus was a river of Myſia, Georg. 4.

Saxoſumque ſonans Hypanis, Myſuſque Caicus.

But what relation has Caicus to the Cetaeans? Heſychius informs us, that they are a people of Myſia, ſo called from the river Cetium, which runs through their country; Κήτειοι, γένος Μυσῶν, ἀπὸ τοῦ παρρέοντος ποταμοῦ Κήτιος. This river diſcharges itſelf into the Caicus, and conſequently the Cetaeans were Myſians, over whom Eurypylus reigned. It would be endleſs to tranſcribe the different opinions of writers cited by Euſtathius; ſome read the verſe thus:

Κήτειοι κλείνοιο γυναικῶν, εἵνεκα δώρων.

Then the meaning will be, *How they fell far from their wives, for the ſake of a reward;* that is, for their pay from Hector, who, as it appears from the Iliad, taxed

To Troy no hero came of nobler line,
Or if of nobler, Memnon, it was thine.
When Ilion in the horſe receiv'd her doom,
And unſeen armies ambuſh'd in its womb;

the Trojans to pay the auxiliaries, one of whom was Eurypylus. Others think the word ſignifies, *great of ſtature*, and in this ſenſe we find it uſed in the firſt line of the 4th Odyſſey.

-------- Δαιεδαίμονα Κητάϊσσαν.

But I have followed the firſt opinion, as appearing moſt probable and natural.

But how are we to explain the ſecond objection, or γυναικῶν εἵνεκα δώρων? Some, ſays Euſtathius, underſtand the expreſſion as applied to Neoptolemus, and not Eurypylus; namely, Eurypylus and his ſoldiers fell by means of the *gifts of women;* that is, Neoptolemus was led to the war by the promiſe of having Hermione in marriage, the daughter of Menelaus, which promiſe occaſioned the death of Eurypylus, by bringing Neoptolemus to the ſiege of Troy. Others underſtand it to be ſpoken of a golden vine, ſent by Priam to his ſiſter Aſtyoche the mother of Eurypylus, to induce her to perſuade her ſon to undertake this expedition to Troy, where he was ſlain by the ſon of Achilles; this vine was ſaid to be given to Tros the father of Priam by Jupiter, as a recompence for his carrying away his ſon Ganymede to be his cup-bearer; but this is too much a fable to be followed. Others more probably aſſert, that Priam had promiſed one of his daughters to Eurypylus, to engage his aſſiſtance in the war; and this agrees very well with Homer's manner of writing in many places of the Iliad; and there is a great reſemblance between Eurypylus in the Odyſſey, and Othryoneus in the Iliad, lib. 13. 460.

Caſſandra's love he ſought, with boaſts of pow'r,
And promis'd conqueſt was the profer'd dow'r.

Greece gave her latent warriors to my care,
'Twas mine on Troy to pour the impriſon'd war:
Then when the boldeſt boſom beat with fear,
When the ſtern eyes of heroes dropp'd a tear;
Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd,
Fluſh'd in his cheek, or ſally'd in his blood;
Indignant in the dark receſs he ſtands,
Pants for the battle, and the war demands;
His voice breath'd death, and with a martial air
He graſp'd his ſword, and ſhook his glitt'ring ſpear.
And when the gods our arms with conqueſt crown'd,
When Troy's proud bulwarks ſmok'd upon the ground,
Greece to reward her ſoldier's gallant toils
Heap'd high his navy with unnumber'd ſpoils.
Thus great in glory from the din of war
Safe he return'd, without one hoſtile ſcar;
Though ſpears in iron tempeſts rain'd around,
Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltleſs of a wound.
While yet I ſpoke, the ſhade with tranſport glow'd,
Roſe in his majeſty, and nobler trod;
With haughty ſtalk he ſought the diſtant glades
Of warrior kings, and join'd th' illuſtrious ſhades.

Spondanus cites a paſſage from Dictys, lib. 4. that very well explains theſe difficulties: *Inter quae tam laeta, (nimirum mortem Achillis,* etc.) *Priamo ſupervenit nuncius Eurypylum Telephi filium ex Myſia adventare, quem rex multis antea illectum praemiis, ad poſtremum oblatione Caſſandrae confirmaverat, addiderat etiam auream vitem, et ob id per populos memorabilem.*

Now without number ghoſt by ghoſt aroſe,
All wailing with unutterable woes.
Alone, apart, in diſcontented mood
A gloomy ſhade, the ſullen Ajax ſtood;
For ever ſad with proud diſdain he pin'd,
And the loſt arms for ever ſtung his mind;
Though to the conteſt Thetis gave the laws,
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cauſe.

ỳ. 669. *Though to the conteſt Thetis gave the laws,*
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cauſe.]
There are two particulars which want explication in theſe verſes: how did Thetis give the law to the conteſt between Ajax and Ulyſſes? and how could the Trojans be made judges to determine between two Grecian heroes? Thetis the mother of Achilles was a goddeſs, and out of honour to her, the chiefs of the Grecian army propoſed the arms of her ſon as a reward to the moſt worthy; and poetry, to give a magnificence to the ſtory, introduces the goddeſs as acting in perſon what is done upon her account. Thetis may properly be ſaid to be deſirous that the memory of her ſon ſhould be honoured; and Homer, to expreſs this deſire poetically, tells us it was the act of that goddeſs, to propoſe the arms of Achilles as a reward to the moſt worthy of the Grecian heroes.

The ſecond difficulty is fully explained by Euſtathius: Agamemnon finding it an invidious affair to give the preferance to any one of the Grecian heroes, and being willing to avoid the reproach of partiality, commanded the Trojan priſoners to be brought before the whole army, and aſked from which of the two heroes, Ajax or Ulyſſes, they had received the greater detriment; they immediately replied, from Ulyſſes; thus the Trojans adjudged the cauſe. The poet adds, that this was done

O why was I victorious in the ſtrife;
O dear-bought honour with ſo brave a life!
With him the ſtrength of war, the ſoldiers pride,
Our ſecond hope to great Achilles dy'd!
Touch'd at the ſight from tears I ſcarce refrain,
And tender ſorrow thrills in ev'ry vein;
Penſive and ſad I ſtand, at length accoſt,
With accents mild, th' inexorable ghoſt.
Still burns thy rage? and can brave ſouls reſent
Ev'n after death? relent, great ſhade, relent!
Periſh thoſe arms which by the gods decree
Accurs'd our army with the loſe of thee!
With thee we fell; Greece wept thy hapleſs fates;
And ſhook aſtoniſh'd through her hundred ſtates;
Not more, when great Achilles preſt the ground,
And breath'd his manly ſpirit through the wound.
O deem thy fall not ow'd to man's decree,
Jove hated Greece, and puniſh'd Greece in thee!
Turn then, oh peaceful turn! thy wrath controul,
And calm the raging tempeſt of thy ſoul.

by Minerva; that is, the affair was conducted with wiſdom, the reſult of which, in poetry, is uſually aſcribed to the goddeſs of it; and no doubt but the goddeſs of wiſdom muſt always prefer wiſdom to mere valour, or an Ulyſſes to an Ajax. This deciſion is related in a very different manner by other poets, in particular, by Ovid in his Metamorphoſis; but Lucian, in his dialogues, agrees with Homer in every point very circumſtantially; and conſequently, with ſome obſcurity; but what I have here ſaid, fully explains that dialogue of Lucian, as well as this paſſage of Homer.

While yet I ſpeak, the ſhade diſdains to ſtay,
In ſilence turns, and ſullen ſtalks away.

Touch'd at his ſour retreat, through deepeſt night,
Through hell's black bounds I had purſu'd his flight,

ẏ. 691. ——— *The ſhade diſdains to ſtay,*
In ſilence turns, and ſullen ſtalks away.]
This ſilence of Ajax was very much admired by the antients, and Longinus propoſes it as an inſtance of the true ſublimity of thought, which ſprings from an elevation of ſoul, and not from the diction; for a man may be truly ſublime without ſpeaking a word: thus in the ſilence of Ajax there is ſomething more noble, than in any thing he could poſſibly have ſpoken. Monſieur Rapin agrees with Longinus: the ſtubborn untractable Ajax, ſays that author, could not have made a better return to the compliments full of ſubmiſſion which were paid him by Ulyſſes, than by a diſdainful and contemptuous ſilence: Ajax has more the air of grandeur and majeſty, when he ſays nothing, than when the poet makes him ſpeak. Virgil was ſenſible of the beauty of it, and paints Dido in the attitude of Ajax. Fraguier infinitely prefers the ſilence of Dido to that of Ajax; ſhe was a woman diſappointed in love, and therefore no wonder if ſhe was greatly paſſionate, and ſunk under the weight of the calamity; but Ajax was a hero, and ought to have freed himſelf by his courage from ſuch an unworthy degree of reſentment. But to me there appears no weight in this objection: we muſt remember what an hero Ajax is, a ſour, ſtubborn, untractable hero; and, upon all occaſions, given to taciturnity; this is his univerſal and notorious character through the whole Iliad: the poet, therefore, adapts his deſcription to it, and he is the ſame Ajax in the Odyſſey as he was in the Iliad. Had this been ſpoken of any other hero, the criticiſm had been more juſt; but, in Ajax, this ſtubborn ſilence is proper and noble.

And forc'd the ſtubborn ſpectre to reply;
But wond'rous viſions drew my curious eye.
High on a throne tremendous to behold,
Stern Minos waves a mace of burniſh'd gold;
Around ten thouſand thouſand ſpectres ſtand
Through the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band.
Still as they plead, the fatal lots he rowls,
Abſolves the juſt, and dooms the guilty ſouls.
There huge Orion of portentous ſize,
Swift through the gloom a giant-hunter flies:

℣. 701. *Still as they plead*——] The expreſſion in the Greek is remarkable, Ἥμενοι, ἱσταότες τε; that is, *ſtanding and ſitting*: this is to be referred to different perſons; the ἱσταότες were the συνδικασταὶ, or perſons who pleaded the cauſe of the guilty or innocent before the infernal judges: the ἥμενοι were the perſons for whom they pleaded, or thoſe who were about to receive judgment. I doubt not but this was a cuſtom obſerved in the courts of judicature in the days of Homer. Euſtath.

℣. 703. —— *Orion of portentous ſize,*
Swift through the gloom a giant-hunter flies.]
The diverſion of this infernal hunter may ſeem extraordinary in purſuing the ſhades of beaſts; but it was the opinion of the antients, that the ſame paſſions to which men were ſubject on earth continued with them in the other world; and their ſhades were liable to be affected in the ſame manner as their bodies: thus we frequently ſee them ſhedding tears, and Siſyphus ſweats, in rolling the ſtone up the mountain. Virgil;

Stant terra defixae haſtae, paſſimque ſoluti
Per campos paſcuntur equi, quae cura nitentes
Paſcere equos, eadem ſequitur tellure repoſtos.

A pond'rous mace of braſs with direful ſway
Aloft he whirls, to cruſh the ſavage prey;
Stern beaſts in trains that by his truncheon fell,
Now griſly forms, ſhoot o'er the lawns of hell.
There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erſpreads nine acres of infernal ground;

And again,

——— *Curae non ipſa in morte relinquunt.*

I cannot but be of opinion that Milton has far ſurpaſſed both the Greek and the Roman poet, in the deſcription of the employment of the fallen angels in hell, as the ideas are more noble and ſuitable to the characters he deſcribes.

Part on the plain, or in the air ſublime
Upon the wing, or in ſwift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games, or Pythian fields:
Part curb the fiery ſteeds, or ſhun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
Others with vaſt Typhaean rage more fell
Rend up both rocks, and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind: hell ſcarce holds the wild uproar.
——— ——— *others more mild*
Retreated in a ſilent valley, ſing,
With notes angelical to many an harp,
Their own heroic deeds ———
The ſong was partial, but the harmony
Suſpended hell, and took with raviſhment
The thronging audience, etc.

ỳ. 709. *There Tityus* ———] It is needleſs to mention that Virgil has adorned his deſcent into hell with moſt of theſe fables borrowed from Homer; it is equally unneceſſary to relate what antiquity ſays of theſe fabled perſons, and their hiſtories; but the mo-

Two rav'nous vultures furious for their food
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,

ral of them all is obſerved by Euſtathius, and fully explained by Lucretius, which I will lay together from Mr. Dryden's tranſlation.

—— The diſmal tales that poets tell
Are verify'd on earth, and not in hell;
No Tantalus looks with a fearful eye,
Or dreads th' impending rock to cruſh him from on high:
No Tityus, torn by vultures, lies in hell,
Nor could the lobs of his rank liver ſwell
To that prodigious maſs, for their eternal meal.
But he's the Tityus, who, by love oppreſs'd,
Or tyrant paſſion preying on his breaſt,
And ever anxious thoughts, is robb'd of reſt.
The Siſyphus is he, whom noiſe and ſtriſe
Seduce from all the ſoft retreats of life,
To vex the government, diſturb the laws;
Drunk with the fumes of popular applauſe,
He courts the giddy croud to make him great,
And ſweats and toils in vain, to mount the ſov'reign ſeat.
For ſtill to aim at pow'r, and ſtill to fail,
Ever to ſtrive, and never to prevail,
What is it but in reaſon's true account,
To heave the ſtone againſt the riſing mount?

I will only add the reaſon from Euſtathius, why Tityus was fabled to be the ſon of the earth; it was from his being immerſed in worldly cares, and from his centring all his affections upon the earth, as if he had ſprung from it; this is alluded to by the expreſſion κείμενον ἐν ζαπέδῳ. Spondanus gives us another reaſon; Elara being pregnant by Jupiter, he, to avoid the jealouſy of Juno, concealed her in a cavern of the earth, where Tityus being born, is fabled to be the ſon of the earth: he adds, that the fiction of his covering nine acres, aroſe from

Inceſſant gore the liver in his breaſt,
Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal feaſt.
For as o'er Panope's enamel'd plains
Latona journey'd to the Pythian fanes,
With haughty love th' audacious monſter ſtrove
To force the goddeſs, and to rival Jove.

There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds
Pours out deep groans; (with groans all hell reſounds)
Ev'n in the circling floods refreſhment craves,
And pines with thirſt amidſt a ſea of waves:
When to the water he his lip applies,
Back from his lip the treach'rous water flies.
Above, beneath, around his hapleſs head,
Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage ſpread;
There figs ſky-dy'd, a purple hue diſcloſe,
Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,
There dangling pears exalted ſcents unfold,
And yellow apples ripen into gold;

that ſpace of ground which was encloſed for his place of burial. Perhaps the ſtory of Tantalus was invented ſolely to paint the nature of a covetous perſon, who ſtarves amidſt plenty, like Tantalus in the midſt of water. Thus Horace applies it, Sat. 1. ver. 70.

Tantalus a labris ſitiens fugientia captat
Flumina. quid rides? mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur. congeſtis undique ſaccis
Indormis inhians, et tanquam parcere ſacris
Cogeris ———

The fruit he ſtrives to ſeize: but blaſts ariſe,
Toſs it on high, and whirl it to the ſkies.
I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd ſurvey'd
A mournful viſion! the Siſyphian ſhade;
With many a weary ſtep, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone;

ψ. 736. *Up the high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone.*] This is a very remarkable inſtance of the beauty of Homer's verſification; it is taken notice of by Euſtathius, but copiouſly explained by Dionyſius Halicarnaſſeus, in his treatiſe of placing of words.

Λᾶαν βασάζοντα πελώριον ἀμφοτέρηφιν,
Ἤτοι ὁ μὲν σκηριπτόμενος χερσίν τε ποσίν τε,
Λᾶαν ἄνω ὤθισκε ----

Here, ſays Dionyſius, we ſee in the choice and diſpoſition of the words the fact which they deſcribe; the weight of the ſtone, and the ſtriving to heave it up the mountain: to effect this, Homer clogs the verſe with ſpondees, or long ſyllables, and leaves the vowels open, as in λᾶαν, and in ἄνω ὤθισκε, which two words it is impoſſible to pronounce without heſitation and difficulty; the very words and ſyllables are heavy, and as it were make reſiſtance in the pronunciation, to expreſs the heavineſs of the ſtone, and the difficulty with which it is forced up the mountain. To give the Engliſh reader a faint image of the beauty of the original in the tranſlation, I have loaded the verſe with monoſyllabes, and theſe almoſt begin with aſpirates.

Up the high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone.

Homer is no leſs happy in deſcribing the ruſhing down of the ſtone from the top of the mountain.

Αὖτις ἔπειτα πίδονδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀναιδὴς.

Is it not evident, continues Dionyſius, that the ſwift-

The huge round ſtone, reſulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and ſmokes along the ground.
Again the reſtleſs orb his toil renews,
Duſt mounts in clouds, and ſweat deſcends in dews.
Now I the ſtrength of Hercules behold,
A tow'ring ſpectre of gigantic mold,
A ſhadowy form! for high in heav'n's abodes
Himſelf reſides, a god among the gods;

neſs of the verſe imitates the celerity of the ſtone in its deſcent; nay, that the verſe runs with the greater rapidity? What is the cauſe of this? It is becauſe there is not one monoſyllable in the line, and but two diſſyllables, ten of the ſyllables are ſhort, and not one ſpondee in it, except one that could not be avoided at the concluſion of it; there is no hiatus or gape between word and word, no vowels left open to retard the celerity of it: the whole ſeems to be but one word, the ſyllables melt into one another, and flow away with the utmoſt rapidity in a torrent of dactyls. I was too ſenſible of the beauty of this not to endeavour to imitate it, though unſucceſsfully: I have therefore thrown it into the ſwiftneſs of an Alexandrine, to make it of a more proportionable number of ſyllables with the Greek.

I refer the reader for a fuller explication of theſe verſes to Dionyſius.

℣. 743.—*Hercules,—a ſhadowy form.*] This is the paſſage formerly referred to in theſe annotations, to prove that Hercules was in heaven, while his ſhade was in the infernal regions; a full evidence of the partition of the human compoſition into three parts: the body is buried in the earth; the image, or εἴδωλον, deſcends into the regions of the departed; and the ſoul, or the divine part of man, is received into heaven: thus the body of Hercules was conſumed in the flames, his image

There in the bright aſſemblies of the ſkies,
The nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
Here hovering ghoſts, like fowl, his ſhade ſurround,
And clang their pinions with terrific ſound;
Gloomy as night he ſtands, in act to throw
Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.
Around his breaſt a wond'rous zone is rowl'd,
Where woodland monſters grin in fretted gold,
There ſullen lions ſternly ſeem to roar,
The bear to growl, to foam the tuſky boar,
There war and havock and deſtruction ſtood,
And vengeful murder red with human blood.
Thus terribly adorn'd the figures ſhine,
Inimitably wrought with ſkill divine.

is in hell, and his ſoul in heaven. There is a beautiful moral couched in the fable of his being married to Hebe, or *youth*, after death; to imply, that a perpetual youth, or a reputation which never grows old, is the reward of thoſe heroes, who, like Hercules, employ their courage for the good of humankind.

℣. 758. *Inimitably wrought with ſkill divine.*] This verſe is not without obſcurity; Euſtathius gives us ſeveral interpretations of it.

Μὴ τίχνησάμενος, μὴ δ' Αλλό τι τιχνήσαιτο.

The negative μὴ, by being repeated, ſeems to be redundant; and this, in a great meaſure, occaſions the difficulty; but, in the Greek language, two negatives more ſtrongly deny; this being premiſed, we may read the verſe as if the former μὴ were abſent, and then the meaning will be, *He that made this zone, never made any thing equal to it;* as if we ſhould ſay, that Phidias who made the ſtatue of Jupiter never made any other ſtatue

The mighty ghoſt advanc'd with awful look,
And turning his grim viſage, ſternly ſpoke.
O exercis'd in grief! by arts refin'd!
O taught to bear the wrongs of baſe mankind!
Such, ſuch was I! ſtill toſt from care to care,
While in your world I drew the vital air;
Ev'n I who from the lord of thunders roſe,
Bore toils and dangers, and a weight of woes;
To a baſe monarch ſtill a ſlave confin'd,
(The hardeſt bondage to a gen'rous mind!)

like it; that is, he employed the whole power of his ſkill upon it. Others underſtand the verſe as an execration: *Oh never, never may the hand that made it, make any thing again ſo terrible as this zone:* and this will give ſome reaſon for the repetition of the negative particles. Dacier approves of this latter explication, and moralizes upon it: it proceeds, ſays ſhe, from a tender ſentiment of humanity in Ulyſſes, who wiſhes that there may never more be occaſion for ſuch a deſign, as the artiſt executed in this belt of Hercules: that there may be no more giants to conquer, no more monſters to tame, or no more human blood be ſhed. I wiſh that ſuch a pious and well-natured explication were to be drawn from the paſſage! But how is it poſſible that the artiſt, who made this zone, ſhould ever make another, when he had been in his grave ſome centuries? (for ſuch a diſtance there was between the days of Hercules and Ulyſſes;) and conſequently it would be impertinent to wiſh it. I have therefore followed the former interpretation. I will only add, that this belt of Hercules is the reverſe of the girdle of Venus; in that there is a collection of every thing that is amiable, in this, a variety of horrors; but both are maſterpieces in their kind.

Down to theſe worlds I trod the diſmal way,
And dragg'd the three-mouth'd dog to upper day;
Ev'n hell I conquer'd, through the friendly aid
Of Maia's offspring and the martial maid.

Thus he, nor deign'd for our reply to ſtay,
But turning ſtalk'd with giant ſtrides away.
Curious to view the kings of antient days,
The mighty dead that live in endleſs praiſe,
Reſolv'd I ſtand; and haply had ſurvey'd
The god-like Theſeus, and Perithous' ſhade;

ỳ. 769. *Down to theſe worlds I trod the diſmal way.*] Nothing can be more artfully inſerted than the mention of this deſcent of Hercules into the regions of the dead: Ulyſſes ſhews by it, at leaſt, that it was a vulgar opinion, and conſequently within the degrees of poetical probability; a poet being at liberty to follow common fame: in particular, it could not fail of having a full effect upon his Phaeacian auditors, not only as it in ſome meaſure ſets him upon a level with Hercules, but as it is an example of a like undertaking with this which he has been relating, and therefore a probable method to gain their belief of it. Euſtathius.

ỳ. 777. —— *And haply had ſurvey'd*
The god-like Theſeus ——]

Plutarch, in his life of Theſeus, informs us, that this verſe has been thought not genuine; but added to the Odyſſey in honour of the Athenians by Piſiſtratus.

The poet ſhews us, that he had ſtill a noble fund of invention, and had it in his power to open new ſcenes of wonder and entertainment; but that this infernal epiſode might not be too long, he ſhifts the ſcene: the invention of the Gorgon, which terrifies him from a longer abode in theſe realms of darkneſs, gives a probable reaſon for his immediate return. Euſtathius in-

But ſwarms of ſpectres roſe from deepeſt hell,
With bloodleſs viſage, and with hideous yell,
They ſcream, they ſhriek; ſad groans and diſmal ſounds
Stun my ſcar'd ears, and pierce hell's utmoſt bounds.
No more my heart the diſmal din ſuſtains,
And my cold blood hangs ſhiv'ring in my veins;
Leſt Gorgon riſing from th' infernal lakes,
With horrors arm'd, and curls of hiſſing ſnakes,
Should fix me, ſtiffen'd at the monſtrous ſight,
A ſtony image, in eternal night!

forms us from Athenaeus, that Alexander the Mydian writes in his hiſtory of animals, that there really was a creature in Lybia, which the Nomades called a Gorgon; it reſembled a wild ram, or, as ſome affirm, a calf; whoſe breath was of ſuch a poiſonous nature, as to kill all that approached it: in the ſame region the Catoblepton is found, a creature like a bull, whoſe eyes are ſo fixed in the head as chiefly to look downward; Pliny calls it Catoblepas, lib. 8. cap. 21. which is likewiſe ſuppoſed to kill with its eyes: the Gorgon, proceeds Athenaeus, has its hair hanging over its eyes down from the forehead, of ſuch thickneſs that it ſcarce is able to remove it, to guide itſelf from danger; but it kills not by his breath, but with emanations darted from its eyes: the beaſt was well known in the time of Marius, for certain of his ſoldiers ſeeing it, miſtook it for a wild ſheep, and purſued to take it; but the hair being removed by the motion of its flying, it ſlew all upon whom it looked: at length the Nomades, who knew the nature of the beaſt, deſtroyed it with darts at a diſtance, and carried it to the general Marius. Howſoever little truth there may be in this ſtory, it is a ſufficient ground for poetical fictions, and all the fables that are aſcribed to the Gorgon.

Strait from the direful coaſt to purer air
I ſpeed my flight, and to my mates repair.
My mates aſcend the ſhip; they ſtrike their oars;
The mountains leſſen, and retreat the ſhores;
Swift o'er the waves we fly; the freſhning gales
Sing through the ſhrouds, and ſtretch the ſwelling ſails.

℣. 789. ——— *To purer air*
I ſpeed my flight.——]

It may not probably be unpleaſant to the reader, to obſerve the manner how the two great poets Homer and Virgil cloſe the ſcene of their infernal adventures, by reſtoring their heroes to the earth. Ulyſſes returns by the ſame way he deſcended, of which we have a plain deſcription in the beginning of this book: Virgil takes a different method, he borrows his concluſion from another part of Homer; in which he deſcribes the two gates of ſleep; the one is ivory, the other of horn: through the ivory gate, iſſue falſhoods, through the gate of horn, truths: Virgil diſmiſſes Æneas through the gate of falſhood: now, what is this, but to inform us, that all that he relates is nothing but a dream, and that dream a falſhood? I ſubmit it to the critics who are more diſpoſed to find fault than I am, to determine whether Virgil ought to be cenſured for ſuch an acknowlegement, or praiſed for his ingenuity?

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis.

He relates, how after his return from the ſhades, he was ſent by Circe on his voyage, by the coaſt of the Sirens, and by the ſtreight of Scylla and Charybdis: the manner in which he eſcaped thoſe dangers: how being caſt on the iſland Trinacria, his companions deſtroyed the oxen of the ſun: the vengeance that followed; how all periſhed by ſhipwreck except himſelf, who, ſwimming on the maſt of the ſhip, arrived on the iſland of Calypſo. With which his narration concludes.

THUS o'er the rolling ſurge the veſſel flies,
'Till from the waves th' Ææan hills ariſe.
Here the gay Morn reſides in radiant bow'rs,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing Hours;

We are now drawing to a concluſion of the epiſodic narration of the Odyſſey; it may therefore not be unentertaining to ſpeak ſomething concerning the nature of it, before we diſmiſs it.

There are two ways of relating paſt ſubjects: the one, ſimply and methodically by a plain rehearſal, and this is the province of hiſtory; the other artificially,

Here Phoebus riſing in th' etherial way,
Through heav'n's bright portals pours the beamy day.

where the author makes no appearance in perſon, but introduces ſpeakers, and this is the practice of epic poetry. By this method the poet brings upon the ſtage thoſe very perſons who performed the action he repreſents: he makes them ſpeak and act over again the words and actions they ſpoke or performed before, and in ſome ſort tranſports his auditors to the time when, and the places where, the action was done. This method is of ſo great uſe, it prevents the poet from delivering his ſtory in a plain ſimple way like an hiſtorian, it makes the auditors witneſſes of it, and the action diſcovers itſelf. Thus, for inſtance, it is not Homer, but Ulyſſes who ſpeaks; the poet is withdrawn, and the hero, whoſe ſtory we hear, is, as it were, raiſed from the grave, and relates it in perſon to the audience. Ariſtotle obſerves, that the epic poem ought to be dramatic, that is, active; Homer, ſays that author, ought to be eſpecially commended for being the only poet who knew exactly what to do; he ſpeaks little himſelf, but introduces ſome of his perſons, a man or a woman, a god or a goddeſs; and this renders his poem active or dramatic. Narration is the very ſoul that animates the poem, it gives an opportunity to the poet to adorn it with different epiſodes; it has, as it were, the whole world for its ſtage, and gives him liberty to ſearch through the creation for incidents or adventures for the employment of his heroes. Thus, for inſtance, he was at liberty to aſcribe the ſeveral dangers of Scylla and Charibdis, of Polypheme and Antiphates, to Ulyſſes, though that hero had been as unacquainted with thoſe dangers, as Æneas was in reality with Dido; the choice of the epiſodes being not eſſential, but arbitrary.

In ſhort, it is from this epiſodic narration that the

At once we fix our haulſers on the land,
At once deſcend, and preſs the deſart ſand;

poet could at all find room to place theſe epiſodes in the Odyſſey. Ariſtotle, I confeſs, has ſet no preciſe limits to the time of the action, but the critics in general confine it to one campain; at leaſt, they affirm this to be the moſt perfect duration, accorning to the model of the Iliad and Odyſſey. Now this epiſodic narration gives the poet an opportunity to relate all that is contained in four books without breaking in upon the time of the action; for all that we read between the the eighth book and the thirteenth comprehends only the ſpace of one evening; namely, the evening of the thirty-third day. The poet inſerts all the adventures that happened to Ulyſſes in almoſt ten years from his departure from Troy, into the compaſs of one evening by way of narration, and ſo maintains the unity both of the time and action.

I ſpeak not of the narration in general; concerning which the curious may conſult Boſſu, or Dryden's preface to the tranſlation of the Æneis.

ψ. 1. *Thus o'er the rolling ſurge——*] The words in the original are ποταμοῖο ῥόον ὠκεανοῖο, which Strabo judges to mean no more than a part of the ocean, for if it be otherwiſe underſtood, it will be a tautology; and who would write that *he went out of the ocean into the ocean*, as it muſt be rendered if ποταμὸς be the ſame with θάλασσα in the next line? but it is perhaps better to underſtand the paſſage literally and plainly, only to denote the place from whence Ulyſſes returned from his infernal voyage; that is, from the extremity of the ocean. It is uſual for the waves of the ſea to bear violently and rapidly upon ſome ſhores, the waters being pent up by the nearneſs of the land, and therefore form a current, or ῥόον. So that the expreſſion means no

There worn and waſted, loſe our cares in ſleep
To the hoarſe murmurs of the rowling deep.

more than Ulyſſes ſurmounted this current, and then gained the wide ocean.

It is likewiſe evident from the beginning of this book, that Ulyſſes paſſed only one night in hell; for he arrived at the Cimmerians in one day, ſaw the viſions of hell in the following night, and in the ſpace of the next day returned from the Cimmerians in the evening to Circe's iſland, as appears from his going to repoſe immediately upon his landing.

It may be further proved, that this was a nocturnal interview, from the nature of the magical incantations which were always performed by night; all ſacrifices were offered by night to the infernal powers, the offering itſelf was black, to repreſent the kingdom of darkneſs: thus alſo in other poets the moon is ſaid to turn pale at theſe magical rites, or, as Virgil expreſſes it,

Carmina vel coelo poſſunt deducere lunam.

And indeed, as Euſtathius obſerves (from whom this note is chiefly tranſlated) it would have been abſurd to have repreſented the realms of darkneſs ſurveyed by the light of the day.

ỳ. 3. *Here the gay morn reſides in radiant bow'rs,*
Here keeps her revels ———]

This paſſage is full of obſcurity: for how is it poſſible to ſuppoſe this iſland of Circe to be the reſidence of the morning; that is, for the day to riſe immediately upon it, when it is known to lie in a weſtern ſituation? Some have imagined that this is ſpoken ſolely with reſpect to Ulyſſes, who returning from the ſhades, might properly ſay that he arrived at the place where the day reſides, that is, to a place enlightened by the ſun. Others underſtand it comparatively, with reſpect to the

Soon as the morn reſtor'd the day, we pay'd
Sepulchral honours to Elpenor's ſhade.

Cimmerians, or rather to the realms of death, which Homer places in the weſt; with regard to theſe, Æaea may be ſaid to lie in the eaſt, or in the poetical language, to be the reſidence of the morning. Beſides, the Circaean promontory is of an extraordinary altitude, and conſequently the beams at ſun-riſing may fall upon it; nay, it is ſaid to be illuſtrated by the ſun even by night. Others have conjectured, that what is here ſaid, implies no more than that Ulyſſes landed upon the eaſtern parts of the iſland; and laſtly, others, not improbably, refer the whole to the word *ocean* in the former line, and then the whole paſſage will be clear, and agree with the fable of the ſun's riſing and ſetting in the ocean. This is what Euſtathius remarks, who adds, that the antients underſtood χόροι not to ſignify *dances*, but χώροι, the *regions of the morning*. I have tranſlated it in the former ſenſe, according to the conſent of moſt interpreters: and I am perſuaded it is uſed to denote the pleaſure and gaity which the ſun reſtores to the whole creation, when diſpelling the melancholy darkneſs, he reſtores light and gladneſs to the earth; which is imaged to us by the playing or dancing of the firſt beams of the ſun; or rather of Aurora, who properly may be ſaid to dance, being a goddeſs. Dacier renders χόροι, *dances;* but judges that Homer here follows a fabulous geography, and that as he tranſported the Cimmerians with all their darkneſs from the Boſphorus to Campania; ſo likewiſe he now removes Æaea with all its light from Cholchis into Italy: and therefore the poet gives the properties and ſituation to the iſland of Circe, which are only true of the eaſtern Cholchis.

It is very evident, continues ſhe, that Homer was perfectly acquainted with the Phoenician ſtory; he tells us that Elpenor was buried upon the promontory on

Now by the axe the ruſhing foreſt bends,
And the huge pyle along the ſhore aſcends.
Around we ſtand a melancholy train,
And a loud groan re-echoes from the main.
Fierce o'er the Pyre, by fanning breezes ſpread,
The hungry flame devours the ſilent dead.

the ſea-ſhores, and that it was called by his name, Elpenor. Now the Phoenicians, who endeavoured to naturalize all names in their own language, affirmed, according to Bochart, that this promontory was not ſo called from Elpenor, but from their word *hilbinor*, which ſignifies, *ubi albeſcit lux matutina;* that is, *where the dawning of the day begins to appear.* This promontory being of great height, the rays of the morning might fall upon it; and this tradition might furniſh Homer with his fiction of the bowers, and dances of it.

What may ſeem to confirm Dacier's opinion of the tranſportation of Cholchis into Italy, is the immediate mention the poet makes of Jaſon, and Æaetes king of Cholchis: beſides the antients believed Phaſis, a river of Cholchis, to be the bounds of the habitable oriental world: and Æaea being the capital of it, lying upon the Phaſis, it might very rationally be miſtaken for the place where the ſun roſe; thus Mimnermus writes,

Αἰήταο πόλιν τόθι τ' ὠκέος ἠελίοιο
Ἀντῖνες χρυσέῳ κείαται ἐν θαλάμῳ
Ὠκεανῦ παρὰ χείλεσ' ἵν' ἔσχετο δῖος Ἰήσων.

That is, "the city of Æetes, where the rays of the ſun "appear in a bed of gold, above the margin of the "ocean, where the divine Jaſon arrived." This is an evidence that the poet was well acquainted with antiquity, and that, as Strabo judges, his aſtoniſhing fictions have truth for their foundation.

A riſing tomb, the ſilent dead to grace,
Faſt by the rorings of the main we place;
The riſing tomb a lofty column bore,
And high above it roſe the tapering oar.

Mean-time the * Goddeſs our return ſurvey'd
From the pale ghoſts, and hell's tremendous ſhade.
Swift ſhe deſcends: a train of nymphs divine
Bear the rich viands and the generous wine:
In act to ſpeak the ‖ Pow'r of magic ſtands,
And graceful thus accoſts the liſt'ning bands.

O ſons of woe! decreed by adverſe fates
Alive to paſs through hell's eternal gates!
All, ſoon or late, are doom'd that path to tread;
More wretched you! twice number'd with the dead!
This day adjourn your cares; exalt your ſouls,
Indulge the taſte, and drain the ſparkling bowls:
And when the morn unveils her ſaffron ray,
Spread your broad ſails, and plow the liquid way:
Lo I this night, your faithful guide, explain
Your woes by land, your dangers on the main.

The goddeſs ſpoke; in feaſts we waſte the day,
'Till Phoebus downward plung'd his burning ray;
Then ſable night aſcends, and balmy reſt
Seals ev'ry eye, and calms the troubled breaſt.
Then curious ſhe commands me to relate
The dreadful ſcenes of Pluto's dreary ſtate:

* Circe. ‖ Circe.

She ſat in ſilence while the tale I tell,
The wond'rous viſions, and the laws of hell.
Then thus: The lot of man the gods diſpoſe;
Theſe ills are paſt; now hear thy future woes.
O prince attend! ſome fav'ring pow'r be kind,
And print th' important ſtory on thy mind!
Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plow the ſeas;
Their ſong is death, and makes deſtruction pleaſe.

℣. 51. *Next, where the Sirens dwell* ——] The critics have greatly laboured to explain what was the foundation of this fiction of the Sirens. We are told by ſome, that the Sirens were queens of certain ſmall iſlands, named Sirenuſae, that lie near Capreae in Italy, and chiefly inhabited the promontory of Minerva, upon the top of which that goddeſs had a temple, as ſome affirm, built by Ulyſſes, according to this verſe of Seneca, Epiſt. 77.

Alta procelloſo ſpeculatur vertice Pallas.

Here, there was a renowned academy in the reign of the Sirens, famous for eloquence and the liberal ſciences, which gave occaſion for the invention of this fable of the ſweetneſs of the voice, and attracting ſongs of the Sirens. But why then are they fabled to be deſtroyers, and painted in ſuch dreadful colours? We are told, that at laſt the ſtudents abuſed their knowlege, to the colouring of wrong, the corruption of manners, and ſubverſion of government; that is, in the language of poety, they were feigned to be transformed into monſters, and, with their muſic, to have enticed paſſengers to their ruin, who there conſumed their patrimonies, and poiſoned their virtues with riot und effeminacy. The place is now called Maſſa. In the days of Homer the Sirens were fabled to be two only in number, as appears from his ſpeaking of them in the dual, as

Unbleſt the man, whom muſic wins to ſtay
Nigh the curſt ſhore, and liſten to the lay;
No more that wretch ſhall view the joys of life,
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife!
In verdant meads they ſport, and wide around
Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground;

ὄνα Σειρήνοιϊν, νῆσον Σειρήνοιϊν; their names, adds Euſtathius, were Thelxiepaea, and Aglaopheme. Other writers, in particular Lycophron, mention three Sirens, Ligaea, Parthenope, and Leucoſia. Some are of opinion, continues the ſame author, that they were ψαλτρίας καὶ ἑταιρίδας; that is, *ſinging women and harlots*, who, by the ſweetneſs of their voices, drew the unwary to ruin their health and fortune. Others tell us of a certain bay contracted within winding ſtreights and broken cliffs, which, by the ſinging of the winds, and beating of the waters, returns a delightful harmony; that allures the paſſenger to approach, who is immediately thrown againſt the rocks, and ſwallowed up by the violent eddies.

But others underſtand the whole paſſage allegorically, or as a fable containing an excellent moral, to ſhew that if we ſuffer ourſelves to be too much allured by the pleaſures of an idle life, the end will be deſtruction: thus Horace moralizes it;

——— *Vitanda eſt improba Siren*
Deſidia ———————

But the fable may be applied to all pleaſures in general, which, if too eagerly purſued, betray the uncautious into ruin; while wiſe men, like Ulyſſes, making uſe of their reaſon, ſtop their ears againſt their inſinuations.

℣. 57. ——— ——— *Around*
Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground.]

There is a great ſimilitude between this paſſage and the

The ground polluted floates with human gore,
And human carnage taints the dreadful ſhore.
Fly ſwift the dang'rous coaſt; let ev'ry ear
Be ſtop'd againſt the ſong! 'tis death to hear!
Firm to the maſt with chains thyſelf be bound,
Nor truſt thy virtue to th' enchanting ſound.
If mad with tranſport, freedom thou demand,
Be every fetter ſtrain'd, and added band to band.
Theſe ſeas o'erpaſs'd, be wiſe! but I refrain
To mark diſtinct thy voyage o'er the main:
New horrors riſe! let prudence be thy guide,
And guard thy various paſſage through the tide.
High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
The boiling billows thund'ring roll below;

words of Solomon in the Proverbs, where there is a moſt beautiful deſcription of an harlot, in the eighth and ninth chapters.

I beheld among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths, a young man void of underſtanding; and behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and ſubtle of heart, etc. *With her much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield, ſhe forced him with the flattering of her lips; he goeth after her ſtraightway, as an ox goeth to the ſlaughter, but he knoweth not that the dead are there, and her gueſts are in the depths of hell.*

This may ſerve for a comment upon Homer, and it is an inſtance, that without any violence the nature of harlots may be concealed under the fables of the Sirens.

℣. 71. *High o'er the main two rocks* ——] There is undoubtedly a great amplification in the deſcription of Scylla and Charybdis; it may not therefore be unneceſſary to lay before the reader, what is truth and what fiction.

Thucydides, lib. 4. thus deſcribes it. " This ſtreight " is the ſea that flows between Rhegium and Meſſene, " where at the narroweſt diſtance, Sicily is divided " from the continent; and this is that part of the ſea " which Ulyſſes is ſaid to have paſſed, and it is called " Charybdis: this ſea, by reaſon of the ſtreights, and " the concourſe of the Tyrrhene and Sicilian ſeas " breaking violently into it, and there raiſing great " commotions, is with good reaſon called χαλεπὴ, or " *deſtructive*." Charybdis ſtands on the coaſt of Sicily; Scylla on the coaſt of Italy.

Mr. Sandys examined theſe rocks and ſeas with a particular view to the deſcriptions of the poets: ſpeaking of Charybdis, he writes, " When the winds begin " to ruffle, eſpecially from the ſouth, it forthwith runs " round with violent eddies, ſo that many veſſels miſ- " carry by it. The ſtream through the ſtreight runs " toward the Ionian, and part of it ſets into the ha- " ven, which turning about, and meeting with other " ſtreams, makes ſo violent an encounter, that ſhips are " glad to prevent the danger by coming to an anchor. " Scylla, adds he, is ſeated in the midſt of a bay, up- " on the neck of a narrow mountain, which thruſts " itſelf into the ſea, having at the uppermoſt end, a " ſteep high rock, ſo celebrated by the poets, and hy- " perbolically deſcribed by Homer as unacceſſible. The " fables are indeed well fitted to the place, there being " divers little ſharp rocks at the foot of the greater: " Theſe are the dogs that are ſaid to bark there, the " waters by their repercuſſion from them make a noiſe " like the barking of dogs; and the reaſon why Scylla " is ſaid to devour the fiſhes, as Homer expreſſes it.

When ſtung with hunger ſhe embroils the flood,
The ſea-dog and the dolphin are her food;
She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
And all the monſters of the wat'ry way.

" The reaſon of this is, becauſe theſe rocks are fre-

" quented by lamprons, and greater fiſhes, that de-
" vour the bodies of the drowned. But Scylla is now
" without danger, the current not ſetting upon it;
" and I much wonder at the proverb,

Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charibdim,

" when they ſtand twelve miles diſtant: I rather con-
" jecture, adds he, that there has been more than one
" Charybdis, occaſioned by the recoiling ſtreams: as
" one there is between the ſouth end of this bay of
" Scylla, and the oppoſite point of Sicily; there the
" waves juſtling make a violent eddy, which, when
" the winds are rough, more than threaten deſtruction
" to ſhips, as I have heard from the Scyllians, when
" ſeeking perhaps to avoid the then more impetuous
" turning, they have been driven by weather upon the
" not far diſtant Scylla.

Strabo, as Euſtathius remarks, ſpeaking of the Leontines, ſays, that they were an unhoſpitable people, Cyclopeans and Laeſtrigons: and adds, that Scylla and Charybdis were inhabited by robbers and murderers. From the terrible ſituation of thoſe rocks, and the murders and depredations of the robbers, theſe fictions might ariſe: they might murder ſix of the companions of Ulyſſes, and throw them into the ſea from Scylla, which may be expreſſed in their being ſaid to be ſwallowed up by that monſter.

Bochart judges the names of Scylla and Charibdis are of Phoenician extract, the one derived from *Sool*, which ſignifies *loſs* and *ruin*; the other from *Chorobdam*, which implies the *abyſs of deſtruction*.

It is highly probable that theſe rocks were more dangerous formerly than at theſe times, the violence of the waters may not only have enlarged their channel by time, but by throwing up banks and ſands have diverted their courſe from bearing upon theſe rocks with the ſame violence as antiently; add to this, that men by art may have contributed to render theſe ſeas more ſafe,

Through the vaſt waves the dreadful wonders move,
Hence nam'd Erratic by the gods above.
No bird of air, no dove of ſwifteſt wing
That bears Ambroſia to th' aetherial king,

being places of great reſort and navigation. Beſides, the unſkilfulneſs of the antients in ſea affairs, and the ſmallneſs and form of their veſſels, might render thoſe ſeas very dangerous to them, which are ſafe to modern navigators.

℣. 74. *Hence nam'd Erratic* ———] It will reconcile the reader in ſome meaſure to the boldneſs of theſe fictions, if he conſiders that Homer, to render his poetry more marvellous, joins what has been related of the Symplegades, to the deſcription of Scylla and Charybdis: ſuch a fiction of the juſtling of theſe rocks could not be ſhocking to the ears of the antients, who had before heard of the ſame property in the Symplegades. The whole fable is perhaps grounded upon appearance: navigators looking upon theſe rocks at a diſtance, might in different views, according to the poſition of the ſhip, ſometimes ſee them in a direct line, and then they would appear to join, and after they had paſſed a little further they might look upon them obliquely, and then they would be diſcovered to be at ſome diſtance; and this might give occaſion to the fable of their meeting and recoiling alternately. Strabo agrees, that Homer borrowed his deſcription of Scylla and Charybdis from the Symplegades; Homer, ſays he, deſcribes theſe like the Cyanean rocks; he continually lays the foundation of his fables upon ſome well known hiſtory: thus he feigns theſe rocks to be full of danders and horrors, according to the relations of the Cyanean, which, from their juſtling, are called Symplegades.

℣. 75. ——— *No dove of ſwifteſt wing,*
That bears Ambroſia to th' aetherial king.]

What might give Homer this notion, might be what is

" quented by lamprons, and greater fiſhes, that de-
" vour the bodies of the drowned. But Scylla is now
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ỳ. 75. ——— *No dove of ſwifteſt wing,*
That bears Ambroſia to th' aetherial king.]

What might give Homer this notion, might be what is

Shuns the dire rocks: in vain ſhe cuts the ſkies,
The dire rocks meet, and cruſh her as ſhe flies;
Not the fleet bark, when proſp'rous breezes play,
Plows o'er that roring ſurge its deſperate way;
O'erwhelm'd it ſinks: while round a ſmoke expires,
And the waves flaſhing ſeem to burn with fires.
Scarce the fam'd Argo paſs'd theſe raging floods,
The ſacred Argo, fill'd with demigods!
Ev'n ſhe had ſunk, but Jove's imperial bride
Wing'd her fleet ſail, and puſh'd her o'er the tide.

related of the Symplegades. Phineus being aſked, by Jaſon, if he could paſs thoſe rocks with ſafety, he deſires to know how ſwift the veſſel was; Jaſon anſwers, as ſwift as a dove; then, ſaid Phineus, ſend a dove between the rocks, and if ſhe eſcapes, you may paſs in ſafety: Jaſon complies, and the pigeon, in her paſſage, loſt only her tail; that hero immediately ſets ſail, and eſcapes with the loſs only of his rudder: this ſtory being reported of the Symplegades, might give Homer the hint of applying the cruſhing of the doves to Scylla and Charybdis. You may find in Euſtathius ſeveral farfetched notions upon this paſſage, but I ſhall paſs them over in ſilence. Longinus blames it, and I have ventured in the tranſlation to omit that particular which occaſioned his cenſure.

℣. 85. ——— *Jove's imperial bride*
Wing'd her fleet ſail ———]

A poet ſhould endeavour to raiſe his images and expreſſions, as far as poſſible above meanneſs and vulgarity: in this reſpect no poet was ever more happy than Homer: this place is an inſtance of it; it means no more than that while Jaſon made his voyage, he had favourable winds and ſerene air. As Juno is frequently uſed

High in the air the rock its ſummit ſhrouds,
In brooding tempeſts, and in rouling clouds;
Loud ſtorms around and miſts eternal riſe,
Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the ſkies.
When all the broad expanſion bright with day
Glows with th' autumnal or the ſummer ray,
The ſummer and the autumn glows in vain,
The ſky for ever lours, for ever clouds remain.
Impervious to the ſtep of man it ſtands,
Tho' born by twenty feet, tho' arm'd with twenty hands;
Smooth as the poliſh of the mirrour riſe
The ſlippery ſides, and ſhoot into the ſkies.
Full in the centre of this rock diſplay'd,
A yawning cavern caſts a dreadful ſhade:
Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
Sent with full force, could reach the depth below.
Wide to the weſt the horrid gulph extends,
And the dire paſſage down to hell deſcends.
O fly the dreadful ſight! expand thy ſails,
Ply the ſtrong oar, and catch the nimble gales;
Here Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
Tremendous peſt! abhorr'd by man and gods!

in Homer to denote the air, he aſcribes the proſperous wind to that goddeſs, who preſides over the air: thus in poetry, Juno

Wing'd her fleet ſail, and puſh'd her o'er the tide.

Euſtathius.

℣. 104. *And the dire paſſage down to hell deſcends.*] Homer means by hell, the regions of death, and uſes

Hideous her voice, and with leſs terrors roar
The whelps of lions in the midnight hour.
Twelve feet deform'd and foul the fiend diſpreads;
Six horrid necks ſhe rears, and ſix terrific heads;

it to teach us that there is no paſſing by this rock without deſtruction, or in Homer's words, it is a ſure paſſage into the kingdom of death. Euſtathius.

℣. 109. —— *With leſs terrors roar*
The whelps of lions ——]

The words in the original are, σκύλακος νεογιλῆς, which, in the proper and immediate ſenſe, do not confine it to the whelps of a lion, but to whelps in general, and perhaps chiefly of the canine kind: νεογιλὸν Euſtathius interprets νεωστὶ γινόμενον, or *newly whelped*, and in the latter ſenſe the paſſage is underſtood by that author; for he writes, φωνὴ σκύλακος ὀλίγη, Σκύλλη δὲ μεγὰ κακὸν; that is, *the voice of a whelp is low, but Scylla is deſcribed as an huge monſter;* and the poet uſes it as we do this expreſſion; *The voice of a wicked man is ſoft, but his deeds are miſchievous and abominable.* I have adventured to tranſlate the words in the other ſenſe, after moſt interpreters, for Homer expreſſes the voice of Scylla by Δεινὸν λελακυῖα, or *uttering a dreadful noiſe:* now, what he calls her voice, is nothing but the roring of the waves in ſtorms when they beat againſt that rock; and this being very loud, is better repreſented by the roring of a lion, than the complaining of a young whelp. Chapman follows Euſtathius.

For here the whuling Scylla ſhrouds her face,
That breathes a voice, at all parts, no more baſe
Than are a newly-kitten'd kittling's cries.

Which is really burleſque enough. Dacier renders the words by *rugiſſement d'un jeune lion*, or *the rorings of a young lion.*

Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth;
Jaggy they ſtand, the gaping den of death:
Her parts obſcene the raging billows hide;
Her boſom terribly o'erlooks the tide.
When ſtung with hunger ſhe embroils the flood,
The ſea-dog and the dolphin are her food;
She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
And all the monſters of the wat'ry way;
The ſwifteſt racer of the azure plain
Here fills her ſails and ſpreads her oars in vain;
Fell Scylla riſes, in her fury roars,
At once ſix mouths expands, at once ſix men devours.
Cloſe by, a rock of leſs enormous height
Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dang'rous ſtreight;
Full on its crown a fig's green branches riſe,
And ſhoot a leafy foreſt to the ſkies;

ỳ. 118. *The ſea-dog and the dolphin are her food.*] Polybius (as Strabo remarks) contends, that Homer, in all his fictions, alludes to the cuſtoms of antiquity: for inſtance, Scylla was a famous fiſhery for taking ſuch fiſhes as Homer mentions: this was the manner of taking the ſea-dog; ſeveral ſmall boats went out only with two men in each, the one rowed, the other ſtood with his inſtrument ready to ſtrike the fiſh; all the boats had one ſpeculator in common, to give notice when the fiſh approached, which uſually ſwum with more than half of the body above water: Ulyſſes is this ſpeculator, who ſtands armed with his ſpear; and it is probable, adds Polybius, that Homer thought Ulyſſes really viſited Scylla, ſince he aſcribes to Scylla that manner of fiſhing which is really practiſed by the Scyllians.

ỳ. 127. *Full on its crown a fig's green branches riſe.*]

Beneath, Charybdis holds her boiſt'rous reign
'Midſt roring whirlpools, and abſorbs the main,
Thrice in her gulphs the boiling ſeas ſubſide,
Thrice in dire thunders ſhe refunds the tide.

Theſe particularities, which ſeem of no conſequence, have a very good effect in poetry, as they give the relation an air of truth and probability. For, what can induce a poet to mention ſuch a tree, if the tree were not there in reality? Neither is this fig-tree deſcribed in vain, it is the means of preſerving the life of Ulyſſes in the ſequel of the ſtory. The poet deſcribes the fig-tree loaded with leaves; even this circumſtance is of uſe, for the branches would then bend downward to the ſea by their weight, and be reached by Ulyſſes more eaſily. It ſhews likewiſe, that this ſhipwreck was not in winter, for then the branches are naked. Euſtathius.

Dacier gathers from hence, that the ſeaſon was autumn, meaning the time when Ulyſſes arrived among the Phaeacians; but this is a miſtake, for he was caſt upon the Ogygian coaſt by this ſtorm, and there remained with Calypſo many years. The branch with which Ulyſſes girds his loins in the ſixth book is deſcribed with leaves, and that is indeed a full proof that he was thrown upon the Phaeacian ſhores before the ſeaſon in which trees ſhed their leaves, and probably in the autumn.

℣. 131. *Thrice in her gulphs the boiling ſeas ſubſide,*
Thrice in dire thunders ſhe refunds the tide.]

Strabo quotes this paſſage to prove, that Homer underſtood the flux and reflux of the ocean. "An inſtance, "ſays he, of the care that poet took to inform himſelf "in all things, is what he writes concerning the tides, "for he calls the reflux ἄφορρον or the *revolution of the* "*waters*: he tells us, that Scylla (it ſhould be Charyb-"dis) thrice ſwallows, and thrice refunds the waves; "this muſt be underſtood of regular tides." There are

Oh if thy veſſel plow the direful waves
When ſeas retreating roar within her caves,
Ye periſh all! though he who rules the main
Lend his ſtrong aid, his aid he lends in vain.
Ah ſhun the horrid gulph! by Scylla fly,
'Tis better ſix to loſe, than all to die.

I then: O nymph propitious to my pray'r,
Goddeſs divine, my guardian pow'r declare,
Is the foul fiend from human vengeance freed?
Or if I riſe in arms, can Scylla bleed?

Then ſhe: O worn by toils, oh broke in fight,
Still are new toils and war thy dear delight?
Will martial flames for ever fire thy mind,
And never, never be to heav'n reſign'd:
How vain thy efforts to avenge the wrong?
Deathleſs the peſt! impenetrably ſtrong!

indeed but two tides in a day, but this is the error of the librarians, who put τρὶς for δὶς. Euſtathius ſolves the expreſſion of the three tides differently, it ought to be underſtood of the νυχθήμερος, or the ſpace of the night and day, and then there will be a regular flux and reflux thrice in that time, or every eight hours periodically.

℣. 142. *Or if I riſe in arms, can Scylla bleed?*] This ſhort queſtion excellently declares the undaunted ſpirit of this hero; Circe lays before him the moſt affrighting danger; Ulyſſes immediately offers to encounter it, to revenge the death of his friends, and the poet artfully at the ſame time makes their goddeſs launch out into the praiſe of his intrepidity; a judicious method to exalt the character of his hero. Dacier.

Furious and fell, tremendous to behold!
Ev'n with a look ſhe withers all the bold!
She mocks the weak attempts of human might;
O fly her rage! thy conqueſt is thy flight.
If but to ſeize thy arms thou make delay,
Again the Fury vindicates her prey,
Her ſix mouths yawn, and ſix are ſnatch'd away.
From her foul womb Crataeis gave to air
This dreadful peſt! to her direct thy pray'r,
To curb the monſter in her dire abodes,
And guard thee through the tumult of the floods.
Thence to Trinacria's ſhore you bend your way,
Where graze thy herds, illuſtrious ſource of day!

ỳ. 156. ——— *Crataeis gave to air*
This dreadful peſt ———]

It is not evident who this Crataeis is whom the poet makes the mother of Scylla: Euſtathius informs us that it is Hecate, a goddeſs very properly recommended by Circe; ſhe, like Circe, being the preſident over ſorceries and enchantments. But why ſhould ſhe be ſaid to be the mother of Scylla? Dacier imagines that Homer ſpeaks aenigmatically, and intends to teach us that theſe monſters are merely the creation or offspring of magic, or poetry.

ỳ. 161. *Where graze thy herds* ——] This fiction concerning the immortal herds of Apollo, is bold, but founded upon truth and reality. Nothing is more certain than that in antient times whole herds of cattle were conſecrated to the gods, and were therefore ſacred and inviolable: theſe being always of a fixed number, neither more nor leſs than at the firſt conſecration, the poet feigns that they never bred or increaſed: and being conſtantly ſupplied upon any vacancy, they were

Sev'n herds, ſev'n flocks enrich the ſacred plains,
Each herd, each flock full fifty heads contains;
The wond'rous kind a length of age ſurvey,
By breed increaſe not, nor by death decay.
Two ſiſter goddeſſes poſſeſs the plain,
The conſtant guardians of the woolly train;
Lampetie fair, and Phaethuſa young,
From Phoebus and the bright Neaera ſprung:
Here watchful o'er the flocks, in ſhady bow'rs
And flow'ry meads they waſte the joyous hours.
Rob not the god! and ſo propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impell thy ſails;
But if thy impious hands the flocks deſtroy,
The gods, the gods avenge it, and ye die!
'Tis thine alone (thy friends and navy loſt)
Through tedious toils to view thy native coaſt.

fabled to be immortal, or never to decay; (for the ſame cauſe one of the moſt famous legions of antiquity was called immortal.) Euſtathius informs us, that they were labouring oxen employed in tillage, and it was eſteemed a particular prophanation to deſtroy a labouring ox, it was criminal to eat of it, nay, it was forbid to be offered even in ſacrifices to the gods; and a crime puniſhable with death by the laws of Solon: ſo that the moral intended by Homer, in this fable of the violation of the herds of Apollo, is, that in our utmoſt neceſſity we ought not to offend the gods. As to the flocks of ſheep, Herodotus informs us, that in Apollonia along the Ionian gulph, flocks of ſheep were conſecrated to that deity, and were therefore inviolable.

She ceas'd: and now aroſe the morning ray;
Swift to her dome the goddeſs held her way.
Then to my mates I meaſur'd back the plain,
Climb'd the talk bark, and ruſh'd into the main;
Then bending to the ſtroke, their oars they drew
To their broad breaſts, and ſwift the galley flew.
Up ſprung a briſker breeze; with freſhning gales
The friendly goddeſs ſtretch'd the ſwelling ſails;
We drop our oars; at eaſe the pilot guides;
The veſſel light along the level glides,
When riſing ſad and ſlow, with penſive look,
Thus to the melancholy train I ſpoke;
O friends, oh ever partners of my woes,
Attend while I what heav'n foredooms diſcloſe,

ỳ. 179. *Swift to her dome the goddeſs held her way.*] It is very judicious in the poet not to amuſe us with repeating the compliments that paſſed between theſe two lovers at parting: the commerce Ulyſſes held with Circe was ſo far from contributing to the end of the Odyſſey, that it was one of the greateſt impediments to it; and therefore Homer diſmiſſes that ſubject in a few words, and paſſes on directly to the great ſufferings and adventures of his hero, which are eſſential to the poem. But it may not be unneceſſary to obſerve how artfully the poet connects this epiſode of Circe with the thread of it; he makes even the goddeſs, who detains him from his country, contribute to his return thither, by the advice ſhe gives him how to eſcape the dangers of the ocean, and how to behave in the difficult emergencies of his voyages: it is true, ſhe detains him out of fondneſs, but yet this very fondneſs is of uſe to him, ſince it makes a goddeſs his inſtructor, and, as it were, a guide to his country.

Hear all! fate hangs o'er all! on you it lies
To live, or periſh! to be ſafe, be wiſe!
In flow'ry meads the ſportive Sirens play,
Touch the ſoft lyre, and tune the vocal lay;
Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
The gods allow to hear the dangerous ſound.
Hear and obey: if freedom I demand,
Be ev'ry fetter ſtrain'd, be added band to band.
While yet I ſpeak, the winged gally flies,
And lo! the Siren ſhores like miſts ariſe.
Sunk were at once the winds; the air above,
And waves below, at once forgot to move!
Some demon calm'd the air, and ſmooth'd the deep,
Huſh'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to ſleep.
Now every ſail we furl, each oar we ply;
Laſh'd by the ſtroke the frothy waters fly.
The ductile wax with buſy hands I mold,
And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd;
Th' aereal region now grew warm with day,
The wax diſſolv'd beneath the burning ray;
Then every ear I barr'd againſt the ſtrain,
And from acceſs of phrenzy lock'd the brain.
Now round the maſt my mates the fetters roll'd,
And bound me limb by limb, with fold on fold.
Then bending to the ſtroke, the active train
Plunge all at once their oars, and cleave the main.
While to the ſhore the rapid veſſel flies,
Our ſwift approach the Siren quire deſcries;

Celeſtial muſic warbles from their tongue,
And thus the ſweet deluders tune the ſong.

O ſtay, oh pride of Greece! Ulyſſes ſtay!
O ceaſe thy courſe, and liſten to our lay!

ỳ. 222. *O ſtay, oh pride of Greece! Ulyſſes ſtay!*] There are ſeveral things remarkable in this ſhort ſong of the Sirens: one of the firſt words they ſpeak is the name of Ulyſſes, this ſhews that they had a kind of omniſcience; and it could not fail of raiſing the curioſity of a wiſe man, to be acquainted with perſons of ſuch extenſive knowlege: the ſong is well adapted to the character of Ulyſſes; it is not pleaſure or dalliance with which they tempt that hero, but a promiſe of wiſdom, and a recital of the war of Troy and his own glory. Cicero was ſo pleaſed with theſe verſes, that he tranſlated them, lib. 5. de finibus bon. et mal.

O Decus Argolicum, quin puppim flectis Ulyſſes,
Auribus ut noſtros poſſis agnoſcere cantus?
Nam nemo haec unquam eſt tranſvectus caerula curſu,
Quin prius adſtiterit vocum dulcedine captus;
Poſt, variis avido ſatiatus pectore muſis,
Doctior ad patrias lapſus pervenerit oras.
Nos grave certamen belli, clademque tenemus
Graecia quam Trojae divino numine vexit,
Omniaque elatis rerum veſtigia terris.

Homer ſaw, ſays Tully, that his fable could not be approved, if he made his hero to be taken with a mere ſong: the Sirens therefore promiſe knowlege, the deſire of which might probably prove ſtronger than the love of his country: to deſire to know all things, whether uſeful or trifles, is a faulty curioſity; but to be led from the contemplation of things great and noble, to a thirſt of knowlege, is an inſtance of a greatneſs of ſoul.

Bleſt is the man ordain'd our voice to hear,
The ſong inſtructs the ſoul, and charms the ear.
Approach! thy ſoul ſhall into raptures riſe!
Approach! and learn new wiſdom from the wiſe!
We know whate'er the kings of mighty name
Atchiev'd at Ilion in the field of fame;
Whate'er beneath the ſun's bright journey lies.
O ſtay and learn new wiſdom from the wiſe!
Thus the ſweet charmers warbled o'er the main;
My ſoul takes wing to meet the heav'nly ſtrain;
I give the ſign, and ſtruggle to be free:
Swift row my mates, and ſhoot along the ſea;
New chains they add, and rapid urge the way,
'Till dying off, the diſtant ſounds decay:
Then ſcudding ſwiftly from the dang'rous ground,
The deafen'd ear unlock'd, the chains unbound.
Now all at once tremendous ſcenes unfold;
Thunder'd the deeps, the ſmoking billows roll'd!

ỳ. 241. —*The ſmoking billows roll'd.*] What is to be underſtood by the ſmoke of the billows? Does the poet mean a real fire ariſing from the rocks? Moſt of the critics have judged that the rock vomited out flames; for Homer mentions in the beginning of this book,

------ Πυρὸς τ' ὀλοοῖο θύελλαι.

I have taken the liberty to tranſlate both theſe paſſages in a different ſenſe; by the ſmoke I underſtand the miſts that ariſe from the commotion and daſhing of the waters; and by the *ſtorms of fire*, as Homer expreſſes it, the reflexions the water caſts in ſuch agitations that reſembles flames; thus in ſtorms literally

Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood,
All trembling, deafen'd, and aghaſt we ſtood!
No more the veſſel plow'd the dreadful wave,
Fear ſeiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave;
Each drop'd his oar: but ſwift from man to man
With look ſerene I turn'd, and thus began.
O friends! oh often try'd in adverſe ſtorms!
With ills familiar in more dreadful forms!
Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay,
Yet ſafe return'd——Ulyſſes led the way.

——— *Ardeſcunt ignibus undae.*

Scylla and Charybdis are in a continual ſtorm, and may therefore be ſaid to emit flames. I have ſoftened the expreſſion in the tranſlation by inſerting the word *ſeem*.

Ulyſſes continues upon one of theſe rocks ſeveral hours; that is, from morning till noon, as appears from the concluſion of this book; for leaping from the float, he laid hold upon a fig-tree that grew upon Charybdis; but both the fig-tree and Ulyſſes muſt have been conſumed, if the rock had really emitted flames.

℣. 250. *Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay,*
Yet ſafe return'd—Ulyſſes led the way.]

Plutarch excellently explains this paſſage in his Diſſertation, *How a man may praiſe himſelf without blame or envy*: "Ulyſſes, ſays that author, ſpeaks not out of "vanity; he ſaw his companions terrified with the "noiſe, tumult, and ſmoke of the gulphs of Scylla "and Charybdis; he therefore, to give them courage, "reminds them of his wiſdom and valour, which they "found had frequently extricated them from other "dangers: this is not vain-glory or boaſting, but the "dictate of wiſdom; to infuſe courage into his friends, "he engages his virtue, proweſs, and capacity for their

Learn courage hence! and in my care confide:
Lo! ſtill the ſame Ulyſſes is your guide!
Attend my words! your oars inceſſant ply;
Strain ev'ry nerve, and bid the veſſel fly.

" ſafety, and ſhews what confidence they ought to re-
" poſe in his conduct." Virgil puts the words of Ulyſſes in the mouth of Æneas.

O ſocii, neque enim ignari ſumus ante malorum,
O paſſi graviora; dabit deus his quoque finem.
Vos et Scyllaeam rabiem penituſque ſonantes
Acceſtis ſcopulos: vos et Cyclopea ſaxa
Experti, revocate animos, moeſtumque timorem
Mittite. Forſan et haec olim meminiſſe juvabit.

It muſt be be allowed, that Virgil has improved what he borrows; it tends more to confirm the courage of his friends than what Ulyſſes ſpeaks: Macrobius is of this opinion; Saturn. lib. 5. cap. 11. Ulyſſes lays before his companions only one inſtance of his conduct in eſcaping dangers, Æneas mentions a ſecond: there is ſomething more ſtrong in

——— *Forſan et haec olim meminiſſe juvabit,*

than in καὶ τουτῶν μνήσεσθαι ὀΐω; not only as it gives them hope to eſcape, but as it is an aſſurance that this very danger ſhall be a pleaſure, and add to their future happineſs: it is not only an argument of reſolution but conſolation. Scaliger agrees with Macrobius, *Ex ipſis periculis proponit voluptatem: nihil enim jucundius ea memoria quae periculorum evaſionem, victoriamque recordatione repraeſentat.*

If from yon juſtling rocks and wavy war
Jove ſafety grants; he grants it to your care.
And thou whoſe guiding hand directs our way,
Pilot, attentive liſten and obey!
Bear wide thy courſe, nor plow thoſe angry waves
Where rolls yon ſmoke, yon tumbling ocean raves;
Steer by the higher rock; leſt whirl'd around
We ſink, beneath the circling eddy drown'd.
While yet I ſpeak, at once their oars they ſeize,
Stretch to the ſtroke, and bruſh the working ſeas.
Cautious the name of Scylla I ſuppreſt;
That dreadful ſound had chill'd the boldeſt breaſt.
Mean time forgetful of the voice divine,
All dreadful bright my limbs in armour ſhine;

ỳ. 268. ——— *Forgetful of the voice divine,*
All dreadful bright my limbs in armour ſhine.]
This ſeemingly ſmall circumſtance is not without a good effect: it ſhews that Ulyſſes even by the injunctions of a goddeſs, cannot lay aſide the hero. It is not out of a particular care of his own ſafety that he arms himſelf, for he takes his ſtand in the moſt open and dangerous part of the veſſel. It is an evidence likewiſe that the death of his companions is not owing to a want of his protection; for it is plain that, as Horace expreſſes it,

Dum ſibi, dum ſociis reditum parat, aſpera multa
Pertulit ——— ———

By this conduct we ſee likewiſe, that all the parts of the Odyſſey are conſiſtent, and that the ſame care of his companions, which Homer aſcribes to Ulyſſes in the firſt lines of it, is viſible through the whole poem.

High on the deck I take my dang'rous ſtand,
Two glitt'ring javelins lighten in my hand;
Prepar'd to whirl the whizzing ſpear I ſtay,
'Till the fell fiend ariſe to ſeiſe her prey.
Around the dungeon, ſtudious to behold
The hideous peſt, my labouring eyes I roll'd;
In vain! the diſmal dungeon dark as night
Veils the dire monſter, and confounds the ſight.

Now through the rocks, appal'd with deep diſmay,
We bend our courſe, and ſtem the deſp'rate way;
Dire Scylla there a ſcene of horror forms,
And here Charybdis fills the deep with ſtorms.
When the tide ruſhes from her rumbling caves
The rough rock roars; tumultuous boil the waves;
They toſs, they foam, a wild confuſion raiſe,
Like waters bubbling o'er the fiery blaze;

℣. 283. *The rough rock roars* ———] I doubt not every reader who is acquainted with Homer, has taken notice in this book, how he all along adapts his verſes to the horrible ſubject he deſcribes, and paints the rorings of the ocean in words as ſonorous as that element. Δεινὸν ἀνεῤῥοίϐδησε --- τρὶς ἀναροιβδεῖ ---- ἀναβρόξειε ---- ϐόμϐησεν, etc. *Subjicit rem oculis, et aurium noſtrarum dominus eſt*, ſays Scaliger. It is impoſſible to preſerve the beauty of Homer, in a language ſo much inferior; but I have endeavoured to imitate what I could not equal. I have clogged the verſe with the roughneſs and identity of a letter, which is the harſheſt our language affords; and clogged it with monoſyllables, that the concourſe of the rough letters might be more quick and cloſe in the pronunciation, and the moſt open and ſounding vowel occur in every word.

Eternal miſts obſcure th' aereal plain,
And high above the rock ſhe ſpouts the main;
When in her gulphs the ruſhing ſea ſubſides,
She dreins the ocean with the refluent tides:
The rock rebellows with a thund'ring ſound;
Deep, wond'rous deep, below appears the ground.
Struck with deſpair, with trembling hearts we view'd
The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood;
When lo! fierce Scylla ſtoop'd to ſeize her prey,
Stretch'd her dire jaws, and ſwept ſix men away;
Chiefs of renown! loud echoing ſhrieks ariſe;
I turn and view them quivering in the ſkies;
They call, and aid with out-ſtretch'd arms implore:
In vain they call! thoſe arms are ſtretch'd no more.
As from ſome rock that overhangs the flood,
The ſilent fiſher caſts th' inſidious food,
With fraudful care he waits the finny prize,
And ſudden lifts it quivering to the ſkies:
So the foul monſter lifts her prey on high,
So pant the wretches, ſtruggling in the ſkies;

℣. 300. *As from ſome rock that overhangs the flood,*
The ſilent fiſher ——]

Theſe tender and calm ſimilitudes have a peculiar beauty, when introduced to illuſtrate ſuch images of terror as the poet here deſcribes: they ſet off each the other by an happy contraſt, and become both more ſtrong by oppoſition. Euſtathius remarks, that there is always a peculiar ſweetneſs in alluſions that are borrowed from calm life, as fiſhing, hunting, and rural affairs.

In the wide dungeon ſhe devours her food,
And the fleſh trembles while ſhe churns the blood.
Worn as I am with griefs, with care decay'd;
Never, I never, ſcene ſo dire ſurvey'd!
My ſhiv'ring blood congeal'd forgot to flow,
Aghaſt I ſtood, a monument of woe!
Now from the rocks the rapid veſſel flies,
And the hoarſe din like diſtant thunder dies;
To Sol's bright Iſle our voyage we purſue,
And now the glitt'ring mountains riſe to view.
There ſacred to the radiant god of day
Graze the fair herds, the flocks promiſcuous ſtray:
Then ſuddenly was heard along the main
To low the ox, to bleat the woolly train;
Strait to my anxious thoughts the ſound convey'd
The words of Circe and the Theban ſhade;
Warn'd by their awful voice theſe ſhores to ſhun,
With cautious fears oppreſt, I thus begun.
O friends! oh ever exercis'd in care!
Hear heav'n's commands, and rev'rence what ye hear!
To fly theſe ſhores the preſcient Theban ſhade
And Circe warns! O be their voice obey'd:
Some mighty woe relentleſs heav'n forebodes:
Fly the dire regions, and revere the gods!

ỳ. 314. *To Sol's bright iſle*——] This iſle is evidently Sicily; for he has already informed us, that theſe herds were on Trinacria, (ſo antiently called from the three promontories of Lilybaeum, Pelorus, and Pachynus.)

While yet I ſpoke, a ſudden ſorrow ran
Through ev'ry breaſt, and ſpread from man to man,
'Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began.

O cruel thou! ſome fury ſure has ſteel'd
That ſtubborn ſoul, by toil untaught to yield!
From ſleep debarr'd, we ſink from woes to woes;
And cruel, envieſt thou a ſhort repoſe?
Still muſt we reſtleſs rove, new ſeas explore,
The ſun deſcending, and ſo near the ſhore?
And lo! the night begins her gloomy reign,
And doubles all the terrors of the main.
Oft in the dead of night loud winds ariſe,
Laſh the wild ſurge, and bluſter in the ſkies;
Oh ſhould the fierce ſouth-weſt his rage diſplay!
And toſs with riſing ſtorms the wat'ry way,
Though gods deſcend from heav'n's aereal plain
To lend us aid, the gods deſcend in vain:
Then while the night diſplays her awful ſhade,
Sweet time of ſlumber! be the night obey'd!
Haſte ye to land! and when the morning ray
Sheds her bright beams, purſue the deſtin'd way.

℣. 532. *'Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began.*] Homer has found out a way to turn reproach into praiſe. What Eurylochus ſpeaks in his wrath againſt Ulyſſes as a fault, is really his glory; it ſhews him to be indefatigable, patient in adverſity, and obedient to the decrees of the gods. And what ſtill heightens the panegyric, is, that it is ſpoken by an enemy, who muſt therefore be free from all ſuſpicion of flattery. Dacier.

A ſudden joy in every boſom roſe;
So will'd ſome demon, miniſter of woes!
To whom with grief——O ſwift to be undone,
Conſtrain'd I act what wiſdom bids me ſhun.
But yonder herds, and yonder flocks forbear;
Atteſt the heav'ns, and call the gods to hear:
Content, an innocent repaſt diſplay,
By Circe giv'n, and fly the dang'rous prey.
Thus I: and while to ſhore the veſſel flies,
With hands uplifted they atteſt the ſkies;
Then where a fountain's gurgling waters play,
They ruſh to land, and end in feaſts the day:
They feed; they quaff; and now (their hunger fled)
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.

ỳ. 363. ——— *And now (their hunger fled)*
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.]
This conduct may ſeem ſomewhat extraordinary; the companions of Ulyſſes appear to have forgot their loſt friends, they entertain themſelves with a due refreſhment, and then find leiſure to mourn; whereas a true ſorrow would more probably have taken away all appetite. But the practice of Ulyſſes's friends is conſonant to the cuſtoms of antiquity: it was eſteemed a prophanation and a piece of ingratitude to the gods, to mix ſorrow with their entertainments: the hours of repaſt were allotted to joy, and thankſgiving to heaven for the bounty it gave to man by ſuſtenance. Beſides, this practice bears a ſecret inſtruction, *viz.* that the principal care is owing to the living; and when that is over, the dead are not to be neglected. Æneas and his friends are drawn in the ſame attitude by Virgil:

Nor ceaſe the tears, till each in ſlumber ſhares
A ſweet forgetfulneſs of human cares.

Now far the night advanc'd her gloomy reign,
And ſetting ſtars roll'd down the azure plain:
When, at the voice of Jove, wild whirlwinds riſe,
And clouds and double darkneſs veil the ſkies;
The moon, the ſtars, the bright aetherial hoſt:
Seem as extinct, and all their ſplendors loſt;
The furious tempeſt roars with dreadful ſound:
Air thunders, rolls the ocean, groans the ground.
All night it rag'd; when morning roſe, to land
We haul'd our bark, and moor'd it on the ſtrand,
Where in a beauteous grotto's cool receſs
Dance the green Nereids of the neighb'ring ſeas.

There while the wild winds whiſtled o'er the main,
Thus careful I addreſt the liſt'ning train.

O friends be wiſe! nor dare the flocks deſtroy
Of theſe fair paſtures: if ye touch, ye die.
Warn'd by the high command of heav'n, be aw'd;
Holy the flocks, and dreadful is the god!
That god who ſpreads the radiant beams of light,
And views wide earth and heav'n's unmeaſur'd height.

And now the moon had run her monthly round,
The ſouth-eaſt bluſt'ring with a dreadful ſound;

Poſtquam exempta fames epulis, menſaeque remotae,
Amiſſos longo ſocios ſermone requirunt;
Praecipue pius Æneas, nunc acris Oronti,
Nunc Amyci caſum gemit, etc.

Unhurt the beeves, untouch'd the woolly train
Low through the grove, or range the flow'ry plain:
Then fail'd our food; then fiſh we make our prey,
Or fowl that ſcreaming haunt the wat'ry way.
'Till now from ſea or flood no ſuccour found,
Famine and meager want beſieg'd us round.
Penſive and pale from grove to grove I ſtray'd,
From the loud ſtorms to find a Sylvan ſhade;
There o'er my hands the living wave I pour;
And heav'n and heav'n's immortal thrones adore,
To calm the rorings of the ſtormy main,
And grant me peaceful to my realms again.
Then o'er my eyes the gods ſoft ſlumber ſhed,
While thus Eurylochus ariſing ſaid.

℣. 395. *Penſive and pale from grove to grove I ſtray'd.*] It was neceſſary, remarks Euſtathius, for the poet to invent ſome pretext to remove Ulyſſes: if he had been preſent, his companions dared not to have diſobeyed him openly; or if they had, it would have ſhewed a want of authority, which would have been a diſparagement to that hero. Now, what pretext could be more rational than to ſuppoſe him withdrawn to offer up his devotions to the gods? his affairs are brought to the utmoſt extremity, his companions murmur, and hunger oppreſſes. The poet, therefore, to bring about the crime of theſe offenders by probable methods, repreſents Ulyſſes retiring to ſupplicate the gods; a conduct which they ought to have imitated: beſides, there is a poetical juſtice obſerved in the whole relation, and by the piety of Ulyſſes, and the guilt of his companions, we acknowlege the equity when we ſee them periſh, and Ulyſſes preſerved from all his dangers.

O friends, a thouſand ways frail mortals lead
To the cold tomb, and dreadful all to tread;
But dreadful moſt, when by a ſlow decay
Pale hunger waſtes the manly ſtrength away.
Why ceaſe ye then t'implore the Pow'rs above,
And offer hecatombs to thund'ring Jove?
Why ſeize ye not yon beeves, and fleecy prey?
Ariſe unanimous; ariſe and ſlay!
And if the gods ordain a ſafe return,
To Phoebus ſhrines ſhall riſe, and altars burn.
But ſhould the pow'rs that o'er mankind preſide,
Decree to plunge us in the whelming tide,

ν. 412. *To Phoebus ſhrines ſhall riſe* ——] Eurylochus puts on an air of piety to perſuade his companions to commit ſacrilege: *Let us ſacrifice*, ſays he, *to the gods:* as if obedience were not better than ſacrifice. Homer underſtood the nature of man, which is ſtudious to find excuſes to juſtify our crimes; and we often offend, merely through hopes of a pardon. Dacier.

The word in the original is ἀγάλματα, which does not ſignify ſtatues, but ornaments, ἀναθήματα, hung up, or repoſited in the temples; ſuch as,

------ Ἀγλαΐης ἕνεκα κομόωσιν ἄνακτες,

or, as it is expreſſed in the Iliad,

------ Βασιλῆι κεῖται ἄγαλμα.

Heſychius interprets ἄγαλμα to be, πᾶν ἐφ' ᾧ τις ἀγάλλεται, ὑκ ὡς συνηθείᾳ ζόανον; that is, ἄγαλμα ſignifies every ornament with which a perſon is delighted or adorned; not a ſtatue, as it is underſtood by the generality. Dacier, Euſtathius.

Better to ruſh at once to ſhades below,
Than linger life away, and nouriſh woe!
Thus he: the beeves around ſecurely ſtray,
When ſwift to ruin they invade the prey;
They ſeize, they kill! ——but for the rite divine,
The barley fail'd, and for libations, wine.
Swift from the oak they ſtrip the ſhady pride;
And verdant leaves the flow'ry cake ſupply'd.
With pray'r they now addreſs th' aetherial train,
Slay the ſelected beeves, and flea the ſlain:
The thighs, with fat involv'd, divide with art,
Strow'd o'er with morſels cut from ev'ry part.
Water, inſtead of wine, is brought in urns,
And pour'd prophanely as the victim burns.
The thighs thus offer'd, and the entrails dreſt,
They roaſt the fragments, and prepare the feaſt.
'Twas then ſoft ſlumber fled my troubled brain;
Back to the bark I ſpeed along the main.
When lo! an odour from the feaſt exhales,
Spreads o'er the coaſt, and ſcents the tainted gales;
A chilly fear congeal'd my vital blood,
And thus obteſting heav'n I mourn'd aloud.
O ſire of men and gods, immortal Jove!
Oh all ye bliſsful pow'rs that reign above!
Why were my cares beguil'd in ſhort repoſe?
O fatal ſlumber, paid with laſting woes!
A deed ſo dreadful all the gods alarms,
Vengeance is on the wing, and heav'n in arms!

Mean time Lampetie mounts th' aereal way,
And kindles into rage the god of day:

Vengeance, ye pow'rs, he cries, and thou whoſe hand
Aims the red bolt, and hurls the writhen brand!
Slain are thoſe herds which I with pride ſurvey,
When through the ports of heav'n I pour the day,
Or deep in ocean plunge the burning ray.
Vengeance, ye gods! or I the ſkies forgo,
And bear the lamp of heav'n to ſhades below.

℣. 451. *And bear the lamp of heav'n to ſhades below.*] This is a very bold fiction, for how can the ſun be imagined to illuminate the regions of the dead; that is, to ſhine within the earth, for there the realm of Pluto is placed by Homer? I am perſuaded the meaning is only that he would no more riſe, but leave the earth and heavens in perpetual darkneſs. Erebus is placed in the weſt, where the ſun ſets, and conſequently when he diſappears he may be ſaid to be ſunk into the realms of darkneſs or Erebus.

Perhaps the whole fiction might be founded really upon the obſervation of ſome unuſual darkneſs of the ſun, either from a total eclipſe or other cauſes, which happened at the time when ſome remarkable crime was committed, and gave the poets liberty to feign that the ſun withdrew his light from the view of it. Thus at the death of Cæſar the globe of the ſun was obſcured, or gave but a weak light, ſays Plutarch, a whole year; and Plin. lib. 2. 80. *fiunt prodigioſi et longiores ſolis defectus, totius paene anni pallore continuo.* This Virgil directly applies to the horror of the ſun, conceived at the death of Cæſar, Georg. 1.

Ille etiam extincto miſeratus Caeſare Romam,
Cum caput obſcura nitidum ferrugine texit,
Impiaque aeternam timuerunt ſecula noctem.

To whom the thund'ring pow'r: O ſource of day!
Whoſe radiant lamp adorns the azure way,
Still may thy beams through heav'n's bright portals riſe,
The joy of earth, and glory of the ſkies:
Lo! my red arm I bare, my thunders guide,
To daſh th' offenders in the whelming tide.
To fair Calypſo from the bright abodes,
Hermes convey'd theſe councils of the gods.

And if Virgil might ſay that the ſun withdrew his beams at the impiety of the Romans, why may not Homer ſay the ſame, concerning the crime of the companions of Ulyſſes? Dacier imagines that Homer had heard of the ſun's ſtanding ſtill at the voice of Joſhua; for if, ſays ſhe, he could ſtand ſtill in the upper region, why may not he do the ſame in the contrary hemiſphere, that is, in the language of Homer, *bear his lamps to ſhades below?* But this ſeems to be ſpoken without any foundation, there being no occaſion to have recourſe to that miraculous event for a ſolution.

ỳ. 458. *To fair Calypſo from the bright abodes,*
Hermes convey'd theſe councils of the gods.]

Theſe lines are inſerted, as Euſtathius obſerves, ſolely to reconcile the ſtory to credibility; for, how was it poſſible for Ulyſſes to arrive at the knowlege of what was done in heaven, without a diſcovery made by ſome of the deities? The perſons by whom theſe diſcourſes of the gods are diſcovered are happily choſen; Mercury was the meſſenger of heaven, and it is this god who deſcends to Calypſo, in the fifth of the Odyſſey; ſo that there was a correſpondence between Calypſo and Mercury; and therefore he is a proper perſon to make this diſcovery to that goddeſs, and ſhe, out of affection, to Ulyſſes.

Mean-time from man to man my tongue exclaims,
My wrath is kindled, and my ſoul in flames.
In vain! I view perform'd the direful deed,
Beeves, ſlain by heaps, along the ocean bleed.
Now heav'n gave ſigns of wrath; along the ground
Crept the raw hides, and with a bellowing ſound
Roar'd the dead limbs; the burning entrails groan'd.

ν. 464. *Now heav'n gave ſigns of wrath; along the ground*
Crept the raw hides ———]

This paſſage, ſays Euſtathius, gave an occaſion of laughter to men diſpoſed to be merry, Λάβας γελοιασμῦ δίδωσι τοῖς παιζειν ἐθέλυσι. He adds, that the terrors of a guilty conſcience drove the companions of Ulyſſes into theſe imaginations: guilt is able to create a phantom in a moment, ſo that theſe appearances were nothing but the illuſions of a diſturbed imagination. He cites a paſſage from the Calliope of Herodotus to vindicate Homer: Artayctes a Perſian general had plundered a temple in which was a tomb of Proteſilaus, where great riches were depoſited; afterwards he was beſieged in Seſtus, and taken priſoner: one day, one of his guards was boiling ſalted fiſhes (τάριχοι); and they leaped, and moved as if they had been alive, and newly taken out of the water: divers perſons crouded about the place, and wondered at the miracle; when Artayctes ſaid, *Friends, you are not at all concerned in this miracle: Proteſilaus, though dead, admoniſhes me by this ſign, that the gods have given him power to revenge the injury I offered to his monument in Eleus.* But this is juſtifying one fable by another; and this looks alſo like the effects of a guilty conſcience.

This is not among the paſſages condemned by Longinus; and indeed it was no way blameable, if we conſider the times when it was ſpoken, and the perſons to

Six guilty days my wretched mates employ
In impious feaſting, and unhallow'd joy;
The ſeventh aroſe, and now the ſire of gods
Rein'd the rough ſtorms, and calm'd the toſſing floods:
With ſpeed the bark we climb; the ſpacious ſails
Loos'd from the yards invite th' impelling gales.

whom it is related: I mean Phaeacians, who were delighted with ſuch wonders. What was ſaid injudiciouſly by a great writer, may very properly be applied to theſe people, *Credo, quia impoſſibile eſt.* But we need not have recourſe to their credulity for a vindication of this ſtory: Homer has given us an account of all the abſtruſe arts, ſuch as necromancy, witchcraft, and natural portents; here he relates a prodigy, the belief of which univerſally prevailed among the antients: let any one read Livy, and he will find innumerable inſtances of prodigies, equally incredible as this, which were related by the wiſe, and believed, at leaſt by the vulgar. Thus we read of ſpeaking oxen, the ſweating of the ſtatues of the gods, in the beſt Roman hiſtories. If ſuch wonders might have a place in hiſtory, they may certainly be allowed room in poetry, whoſe province is fable: it ſignifies nothing whether a ſtory be true or falſe, provided it be eſtabliſhed by common belief, or common fame; this is a ſufficient foundation for poetry. Virgil, Georg. i. 475.

——— *Pecudeſque locutae*
Infandum! ſiſtunt amnes, etc.

The days of wonder are now over, and therefore a poet would be blameable to make uſe of ſuch impoſſibilities in theſe ages: they are now almoſt univerſally diſbelieved, and therefore would not be approved as bold fictions, but exploded as wild extravagancies.

Paſt ſight of ſhore, along the ſurge we bound,
And all above is ſky, and ocean all around!
When lo! a murky cloud the thund'rer forms
Full o'er our heads, and blackens heav'n with ſtorms.
Night dwells o'er all the deep: and now out flies
The gloomy weſt, and whiſtles in the ſkies.

℣. 477. ——— *And now out flies*
The gloomy weſt, etc.]

Longinus, while he condemns the Odeſſey as wanting fire, through the decay of Homer's fancy, excepts the deſcriptions of the tempeſts, which he allows to be painted with the boldeſt and ſtrongeſt ſtrokes of poetry. Let any perſon read that paſſage in the 5th book, and he will be convinced of the fire of Homer's fancy.

Ὡς εἰπὼν σύναγεν νεφέλας ἐτάραξε δὲ πόντον,
Χερσὶ τρίαιναν ἕλων, πάσας δ' ὀρόθυνεν ἀέλλας
Παντοίων ἀνέμων, σὺν δὲ νέφεσσι κάλυψε
Γαῖαν ὁμῶς ἠδὲ πόντον. ὀρώρει δ' οὐρανόθεν νύξ.

The two laſt lines are here repeated; and Scaliger, a ſecond Zoilus of Homer, allows them to be *omnia pulchra, plena, gravia*, p. 469. There is a ſtorm in the very words, and the horrors of it are viſible in the verſes.

Virgil was maſter of too much judgment, not to embelliſh his Æneid with this deſcription.

Incubuere mari, totumque a ſedibus imis
Una Euruſque Notuſque ruunt, creberque procellis
Africus, et vaſtos volvunt ad littora fluctus,
Eripiunt ſubito nubes coelumque diemque
Teucrorum ex oculis: ponto nox incubat atra.

Theſe are almoſt literally tranſlated from the above-mentioned verſes of Homer, and theſe following;

Σὺν δ' Εὖρος τε Νότος τ' ἔπεσε, Ζέφυρός τε δυσαὴς
Καὶ Βορέης ἀιθρηγενέτης, μέγα κῦμα κυλίνδων.

The mountain billows roar: the furious blaſt
Howls o'er the ſhroud, and rends it from the maſt:
The maſt gives way, and crackling as it bends,
Tears up the deck; then all at once deſcends:
The pilot by the tumbling ruin ſlain,
Daſh'd from the helm falls headlong in the main.

Scaliger calls the verſes of Homer, *divina oratio*, but prefers thoſe of Virgil. *Totumque a ſedibus imis*, is ſtronger than ἐτάραξε πόντον, etc. and Αἰθρηγενέτης is an ill-choſen epithet to be uſed to deſcribe a ſtorm, for it carries an image of ſerenity. But that is to be underſtood of the general nature of that wind: as a river may be ſaid to be gentle, though capable to be ſwelled into a flood. But I leave the preference to the reader's judgment.

℣. 483. *The pilot by the tumbling ruin ſlain.*] There is a great ſimilitude between this paſſage and ſome verſes in Virgil, in which, as Scaliger judges, and perhaps with reaſon, the preference is to be given to the Roman poet. *Tenuiſſima*, ſays that critic, *et leviſſima utitur narratione Homerus.*

Πλῆξε κυβερνήτεω κεφαλὴν, σὺν δ' ὀστέα ἄραξε
Πάντ' ἄμυδις κεφαλῆς, ὃ δ' ἀρνυτῆρι ἐοικὼς
Κάππεσε ----

And again,

----- πεσον δ' ἐκ νηὸς ἑταῖροι
Οἱ δὲ κορώνησιν, ἴκελοι περὶ νῆα μέλαιναν
Κύμασιν ἐμφορέοντο.

——— *Ingens a vertice pontus*
In puppim ferit; excutitur, pronuſque magiſter
Volvitur in caput.

——— *Aſt illam ter fluctus ibidem*
Torquet agens circum, et rapidus vorat æquor vortex,
Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vaſto.

Then Jove in anger bids his thunders roll,
And forky lightnings flaſh from pole to pole;
Fierce at our heads his deadly bolt he aims,
Red with uncommon wrath, and wrapt in flames:
Full on the bark it fell; now high, now low,
Toſs'd and retoſs'd, it reel'd beneath the blow;
At once into the main the crew it ſhook:
Sulphureous odours roſe, and ſmould'ring ſmoke.
Like fowl that haunt the floods, they ſink, they riſe,
Now loſt, now ſeen, with ſhrieks and dreadful cries;
And ſtrive to gain the bark; but Jove denies.
Firm at the helm I ſtand, when fierce the main
Ruſh'd with dire noiſe, and daſh'd the ſides in twain;
Again impetuous drove the furious blaſt,
Snapt the ſtrong helm, and bore to ſea the maſt.
Firm to the maſt with cords the helm I bind
And ride aloft, to providence reſign'd,
Through tumbling billows, and a war of wind.
Now ſunk the weſt, and now a ſouthern breeze,
More dreadful than the tempeſt, laſh'd the ſeas;

There is certainly better verſification in the lines of Virgil, than in thoſe of Homer: there is better colouring, and they ſet the thing they deſcribe full before our eyes. Virgil has omitted the two ſhort ſimilitudes of the diver, and the ſea-mews, deſpairing perhaps to to make them ſhine in the Roman language. There is a third ſimile in Homer of the bat or bird of night Νύκτερις, which is introduced to repreſent Ulyſſes clinging round the fig-tree. It is true the whole three are taken from low ſubjects, but they very well paint the thing they were intended to illuſtrate.

For on the rocks it bore where Scylla raves,
And dire Charybdis rolls her thund'ring waves.
All night I drove; and at the dawn of day
Fast by the rocks beheld the desp'rate way:
Just when the sea within her gulphs subsides,
And in the roring whirlpools rush the tides.
Swift from the float I vaulted with a bound,
The lofty fig-tree seiz'd, and clung around.
So to the beam the bat tenacious clings,
And pendant round it claſps his leathern wings.
High in the air the tree its boughs display'd,
And o'er the dungeon cast the dreadful shade,
All unsustain'd between the wave and sky,
Beneath my feet the whirling billows fly.
What time the judge forsakes the noisy bar
To take repast, and stills the wordy war;

ỳ. 519. *What time the judge forsakes the noisy bar*
To take repast ———]

This passage has been egregiously misunderstood by monsr. Perrault. Ulysses being carried, says that author, on his mast towards Charybdis, leaps from it, and clings like a bat round a fig-tree, waiting till the return of the mast from the gulphs of it; and adds, that when he saw it, he was as glad as a judge when he rises from his seat to go to dinner, after having tryed several causes. But Boileau fully vindicates Homer in his reflections on Longinus: before the use of dials or clocks, the antients distinguished the day by some remarkable offices or stated employments: as from the dining of the labourer;

—— *What time in some sequester'd vale*
The weary woodman spreads his sparing meal.

Iliad XI. ver. 119. See the annotation; so here, from

Charybdis rumbling from her inmoſt caves,
The maſt refunded on her refluent waves.
Swift from the tree, the floating maſt to gain,
Sudden I drop'd amidſt the flaſhing main;
Once more undaunted on the ruin rode,
And oar'd with lab'ring arms along the flood.

the riſing of the judges, and both denote the mid-day, or noontide hour. Thus it is uſed by Hippocrates, who, ſpeaking of a perſon wounded with a javelin in the liver, ſays he died πρὶν ἀγορὴν λυθῆναι, a little before the breaking up of the aſſembly, or before the judge riſes from his tribunal: or, as ſome underſtand it, a little before the finiſhing of the market: there is a parallel expreſſion in Xenophon, ἢ ἤδη τι ἀμφὶ ἀγορὰν πλήθουσαν. This riſing of the judge, Perrault miſtakes for a compariſon, to expreſs the joy which Ulyſſes conceived at the ſight of the return of his maſt; than which nothing can be more diſtant from Homer's ſentiment.

From this deſcription we may preciſely learn the time that paſſed while Ulyſſes clung round the fig-tree.

——— *At the dawn of day*
Faſt by the rocks I plow'd the deſp'rate way.

So that at morning he leaped from his float, and about noon recovered it: now, Euſtathius affirms, that in the ſpace of twenty-four hours there are three tides, and dividing that time into three parts, Ulyſſes will appear to have remained upon the rock eight hours. The exact time when the judge roſe from his tribunal is not apparent: Boileau ſuppoſes it to be about three o' clock in the afternoon, Dacier about two; but the time was certain among the antients, and is only dubious to us, as we are ignorant of the hour of the day when the judge entered his tribunal, and when he left it.

Unſeen I paſs'd by Scylla's dire abodes:
So Jove decreed, (dread ſire of men and gods)
Then nine long days I plow'd the calmer ſeas,
Heav'd by the ſurge and wafted by the breeze.
Weary and wet th' Ogygian ſhores I gain,
When the tenth ſun deſcended to the main.

℣. 532. *When the tenth ſun deſcended to the main.*] This account is very extraordinary. Ulyſſes continued upon the maſt ten days, and conſequently ten days without any nouriſhment. Longinus brings this paſſage as an inſtance of the decay of Homer's genius, and his launching out into extravagant fables. I wonder Euſtathius ſhould be ſilent about this objection; but Dacier endeavours to vindicate Homer, from a ſimilar place in the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, cap. 27. ver. 33. where St. Paul ſays to the ſailors, *This is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried, and continued faſting, having taken nothing.* Now, if the ſailors in the *Acts* could faſt fourteen days, why might not Ulyſſes faſt ten? But this place by no means comes up to the point. The words are τισσαρεσκαιδεκάτην σήμερον ἡμέραν προσδοκῶντες, that is, expecting the fourteenth day, (which is to-day) you continue without eating; ſo the meaning is, they had taken no food all that day; the danger was ſo great that they had no leiſure to think upon hunger. This is the literal conſtruction of the words, and implies, that out of expectation of the fourteenth day (which they looked upon as a critical time when their danger would be at the higheſt) they had forgot to take their uſual repaſt; and not, that they had faſted fourteen days. But if any perſon thinks, that the faſting is to be applied to the whole fourteen days, it muſt be in that latitude wherein interpreters expound Heſiod.

---- ὐδὲ τι σῖτον
Ἤσθιον ----

There in Calypſo's ever fragrant bow'rs
Refreſh'd I lay, and joy beguil'd the hours.

which ſignifies, not that they eat no meat at all, but that they had not leiſure through their danger to obſerve the uſual and ſtated hours of repaſt: they eat in their arms, with their hands fouled with blood. But I take the former ſenſe to be the better. Beſides, it is impoſſible to make this place of any ſervice to Homer; for, if theſe men continued ſo long faſting, it was a miraculous faſt; and how can this be applied to Ulyſſes, who is not imagined to owe his power of faſting to any ſupernatural aſſiſtance? But it is almoſt a demonſtration that the ſailors in the *Acts* eat during the tempeſt: why ſhould they abſtain? It was not for want of food; for at St. Paul's injunction they take ſome ſuſtenance: now, it is abſurd to imagine a miracle to be performed, when common and eaſy means were at hand to make ſuch a ſupernatural act unneceſſary. If they had been without food, then indeed a miracle might have been ſuppoſed to ſupply it. If they had died through faſting, when meat was at hand, they would have been guilty of ſtarving themſelves. If therefore we ſuppoſe a miracle, we muſt ſuppoſe it to be wrought, to prevent men from being guilty of wilful ſelf-murder, which is an abſurdity.

Beſides, the word ἄσιτος is uſed to denote a perſon who takes no food for the ſpace of one day only, as μονόσιτος ſignifies a perſon who eats but one meal in the compaſs of one day; this therefore is an evidence, that the ſailors in the *Acts* had not been without ſuſtenance fourteen days.

In ſhort, I am not in the number of thoſe who think Homer has no faults; and unleſs we imagine Ulyſſes to have faſted ten days by the aſſiſtance of the gods, this paſſage muſt be allowed to be extravagant: it is true, Homer ſays, the gods guided him to the Ogygian

My following fates to thee, oh king, are known,
And the bright partner of thy royal throne.
Enough: in miſery can words avail?
And what ſo tedious as a twice-told tale?

ſhores; but he ſays not a word to ſoften the incredibility of the faſting of Ulyſſes, through an aſſiſtance of the gods. I am therefore inclined to ſubſcribe to the opinion of Longinus, that this relation is faulty; but ſay with Horace,

——*Non ego paucis*
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.

The End of the Second Volume.

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